



Minnesota Works Progress Administration:  
Writers Project Research Notes.

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W.W.Winthrop,Esq.,of St.Anthony,has just returned from a trip to the headwaters of the Mississippi,and communicates a brief description of his trip to the country to the FALLS EVENING NEWS. We copy the following:

'Starting from Crow Wing with a half-breed voyageur for guide,Mr. W.,in two and a half days arrived at Leech Lake,which lies 80 miles due north of Crow Wing\*\*\*\*\*during the greater part of the distance a wilderness of dense pine forest containing groves of magnificent trees as yet unattacked by the axe of the lumberman. He shot a number of pertridges and pheasants,and a few foxes and small animals,but found much fewer traces of deer ~~and bears~~ or bear than are to be found farther to the South and West. On the 2nd night(Oct.19),four inches of snow fell, and the cold was severe enough to make the very large campfire by no means too warm.

On arriving at Leech Lake,Mr.W. passed the night in the Indian wigwam, or lodge,and spent the next morning in rambling about the Indian village, which is the most extensive of all the Chippewa settlements,containing a population of about 2000,with 200 warriors\*\*\*\*\*

With the assistance of his former guide,he purchased a canoe and provisions,and engaged a half-breed and a young Chippewa to paddle his canoe,etc. Passing across an arm of the lake--20 miles--to the mouth of Leech River,he sailed 70 miles down the stream to its junction with the Mississippi (to which it is equal in width,and of which it seems to be a southern form,the northern passing through Cass and Winnibigoshis Lakes from Itasca Lake,and being about 200 miles longer)--thence about fifty miles down the Mississippi to Pokegama Falls,and thence 250 miles or more to Crow Wing. Leech River and the Mississippi above Pokegama flow through immense fields of wild rice,abounding at this season in ducks and geese,which afford capital shooting and the best of eating\*\*\*\*\*At convenient intervals for camping at night,the piney banks extend to the river,but generally are separated from the stream by morasses of from one mile to five miles broad. Below Pokegama,the rice fields and morasses disappear and pine forests,interspersed with elm and oak,edge to the river on both sides.

Pokegama is the most interesting and romantic point on the Mississippi above St.Anthony. The river rushes through a narrow pass,with a bold rocky bank on the northern side,and over a rocky bed,and with a roar audible at a considerable distance. There is no distinct fall,but continuous rapids for about a quarter of a mile,capable of furnishing a very great water power for future mills. The Minnesota and Dakota Land Company contested with Mr.Dayton,of St.Paul,the possession of Pokegama for a town site,and each party has one or two men stationed here, whose log houses make an agreeable nucleus of civilization in the wilderness. No lumber camp has yet been built as high up as Pokegama, but Mr.Libby,of St.Anthony,was stationed last winter only forty miles below. Below Pokegama,at considerable intervals,are passed the log houses of the lumbermen;and now and then you ascertain that you are sailing by the site of some future town,such as 'Moscow,' 'Maineville,' 'Portage City,' etc.

At the mouth of Sandy River which carries the waters of Sandy Lake into the Mississippi,Mr.W.ran up the river two miles to the lake,which he described as not of very large size,but prettily indented with bays,



and fringed with beaches of pure white sand.

\*\*\*\*

At Leech Lake, as well as at Pokegama, where there is also a large village of Chippewas, and along both rivers, Mr. W. found the Indian always civil and friendly; and believes them to be generally so, except when their native wildness is excited to passion by the whiskey which is sold to them, in violation of all law, by the unscrupulous traders. The entire trip taken by Mr. W. from Crow Wing and back, embraced a circuit of about 400 miles, and occupied nine and a half days.

Magnet---Tue., July 5, 1892. Minn Hist Soc

G.R. again celebrates 4th. "Successful---glorious---patriotic--large attendance--lots fun--satisfied crowd--no unpleasantness."

Magnet---Tue July 12, 1892. M.H.Soc.

Steamer "LITTLE EAGLE" Joseph Crowther, captain, plying Pokegama Lake to head of Ball Club Lake. Can be hired for hunting, fishing parties, or ~~pleasure~~ pleasure, with or without board. Reg trips every Tues. to head of Ball Club Lake. Rates not mentioned.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet---Tue Aug 23 1892 M.H.Soc

EXTRACTS FROM BOARD OF EQUALIZATION.

The following figures of valuations as made by the Board of E. will be of interest.

The total valuation of the land of the county is \$1,931,876, averaging #3.20 per acre.

Total number acres, exclusive of platted lands, 603,494,  $\frac{1}{4}$

Total ass'd value of real prop. \$2,138,271.

Personal prop. as equalized by Board \$101,128.

Unorganized territory, \$29,295.

LaPrairie Village, \$29,887.

Township, \$788

G.R. Village, \$41,188.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Tue Sep 20 1892 MHS

John Lyon overhauled and fitted up steamer formerly known as the government boat "Kate" and starts Sunday (25th) excursions Pokegama to head of Ball Club. Round trip, \$1, meals on boat 25 cts ea. Leave Falls at 8 a.m. and returns 8 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Tue Oct 4, 1892 MHS

Edward Whitcomb, G.R. Brick yard has burned 500,000 brk this season.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Tue Oct 11, 1892 MHS

First County Fair--Itasca Agr. Soc. --held last Thursday. Far surpassed expectations as to attendance and exhibits. Prize cabbage 26  $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. Mammoth beets, turnips, carrots, potatoes, celery, equal to any.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Tue Nov 1, 1892 MHS

Gladstone formally opened last night (Oct 31). Pat Sheehan, barman, and Robert McGlin, opposite track.

1892

See Magnet of Tue. Nov 8, 1892, 31 Annals file, for "EARLY REMINISCENCES BY HON. G. G. HARTLEY." Letter written to Magnet, recalling 1871 men in G.R.

\*\*\*\*\*

Same paper and date: Minneapolis House (hotel), prps. Messrs Root & ~~Sax~~ Seelye opened last Tues. Nov 1, 1892.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet of 15 inst: MHS

D.M. Gunn's Hotel Pokegama celebrated victory of G.R. in county seat fight last Fri eve. Nov .11 by grand ball and supper.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sauk Rapids Frontiersman Thursday June 24, 1858.

Steamboat North Star, rechristened Anson Northup, just returned to Crow Wing after trip to within two or three miles of Pokegama Falls. 60 persons aboard. 11 days making trip. Ran up into Sandy Lake through 2 mile outlet to Mississippi River, then explored it and ran up Medecine river 6 miles.

\*\*\*\*\*

St. Paul Daily Press Tuesday July 7, 1868. MHS

\*\*\*\*number of Pillager of Leech Lake Indians, after murder of Hole-in-the-day, and the return of the assassins, robbed the warehouses at White Oak Point of U.S. goods and provisions which were in charge of the Indian Agent. Information of the outrage was brought to the Indian agency. He sent at once to Ft Ripley for troops and file of 22 soldiers sent up. Indians dissatisfied with removal of Chippewas of Mississippi band and demand their return and that no more be sent away. Thought that the removal treaty, or Hole-in-the-day's connection with it, caused his murder.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### DAILY

See ANNALS file 31, ST. PAUL PIONEER ~~XXXX~~ Thursday, June 23, 1870, for announcement of Capt Houghton's new boat to run between Little Falls and Pokegama Falls, and report of trip by Houghton in issue of July 3, 1870. This letter describes Pokegama Falls, and territory along river, and is very interesting----copy it.

\*\*\*\*\*

Same annals file. Daily Pioneer for Sep 13 1870. Preparations being made for lumbering in vicinity of Poke Falls.. Says bear and moose very thick all through region. Lumbering to start winter of 1870.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mpls Trib Aug 1 1878. Mpls Pub Lib

Steamer WHITE SWAN leaving ~~for~~ Aitkin for G.R. every Thursday--frt & pass service. Alsop & Mahlum, Brainerd or Capt C.H. Alsop, Aitkin.

\*\*\*\*\*

1858  
1868  
1870  
1878  
1892



Mpls Trib Sept 12,1880- Mpls Lib

Steamer Pokegama running from Aitkin to G.R. on Wed the 15th inst.

\*\*\*\*\*

LaPrairie Magnet--March 26,1891. Upon motion Grand Rapids was declared the temporary county seat,all commissioners voting in affirmative.

\*\*\*\*\*

LaPrairie Magnet Thur March 26,1891. Council votes to hire a school teacher at not over \$100 for a term.

\*\*\*\*\*

LaPrairie Magnet,May 7,1891. Annals 31---M.H.S.

"Fire seized upon the village of Grand Rapids at 2 o'clock Wednesday morning, and left nothing but charred and blackened ruins on that portion of the main business street where had stood the Johnson House and McAlpine's saloon. Just what the cause of the fire was can only be conjectured\*\*\*\* it was first discovered in the loft of that part of the Johnson House which was one story in height and from there it spread so rapidly that nothing could be done to save the hotel or the saloon building adjoining.\*\*\*The Pokegama Hotel, across the street, was badly scorched\*\*\*\* The Johnson loss is some \$3000 upon which they had insurance amounting to \$1500. The McAlpine saloon building, owned by Mr. Walker, was valued at \$800, which is a total loss. This fire makes a serious hole in the business portion of the town."

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 18,1891 (copied from Carlton Vidette) MHS

Grand Rapids voted almost unanimously for incorporation Tuesday\*\*\*\*\*  
~~(the town would be)~~

\*\*\*\*\*

G.R. made a money order P.O. in 1891.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Thu June 25,1891 M.H.S.

G.R. first elect. held Tues. June 23,1891.

G.R. first village election elected: Pres--Michael McAlpine--Trustees--- James Sherry, AT Nason, R.J. Breckenridge---Recorder--T.R. Pravitz---Treas-- H.D. Powers---Geo. F. Meyers, Chas. Kearney---Constables, Wm Smith and John (justices of Peace)

McDonald---Marshal, C.D. Lyon---Street Commissioner, W.V. Fuller.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Thur June 25 1891 MHS

Presbyterian church dedicated June 21,1891, (Sun) done inside and out, and free from debt, needing only a bell.

\*\*\*\*\*

1880

1891



Magnet of July 2,1891,quoting Duluth Evening Herald.  
Doran is landlord of Pokegama hotel on July 1,1891,when crowd from  
Duluth excursed to G.R. and Pokegama Falls.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet July 23 1891--MHS

<sup>1890-1</sup>  
~~1900-1~~ comprised a building period. For 12 months preceding July 23,1891,  
there were erected:  
Hotel Pokegama,\$10,000; Brick block,two story double front,\$4,000;  
Tyndall's beer warehouse,\$2,000; Presbyterian church,\$2,000; Beckfelt's  
two-story store,\$2,000; Beckfelt's warehouse,\$2,000; C.H.Marr's two-story  
store,\$2,000; Hospital,\$2,500; Sherry's beer warehouse,\$1,000; J.W.Johnson  
two-story building,\$1,200; Signel's meat market,\$800; Court House,\$1,000;  
Nason's saloon,\$1,000; Vance & Breckenridge warehouse,\$1,000; Doran's livery  
stable,\$800; Ellingson's blacksmith shop,\$800; Mercier's carpenter shop,  
\$200; Mitchell's land office,\$400; Caselberg's cigar factory,\$600; Hennesey's  
meat market,\$400. In course of construction: McAlpine's brick block,\$2500;  
Knox double front two-story store,\$2500; James McNally saloon \$1,000.  
25 residences aggregating \$16,000.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet July 30,1891--MHS

First marriage license issued in Itasca county taken out by William Lyons (H  
H.Lyons and Miss Amanda S.Larson,Sat.July 25,1891.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Aug 27 1891. MHS. Blaker and his Limburger cheese. Good article to  
include.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Sept 10,1891 MHS

G.R.buys a chemical fire engine at cost of ~~\$15.00~~ \$1,500.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Sept 17 1891. MHS

"Miss Funk,missionary of the W.C.T.U's spoke at the Presbyterian church  
Tuesday evening to a fair sized audience. It is the intention of this lady  
to return here later in the season and inaugurate a campaign of information  
and reform among the lumbermen." No later report,so we don't know how it  
came out,but were intrigued by idea of a lady giving a lumberjack much  
information about booze---and we cannot find where she reformed many.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Oct 1,1891. MHS

"Now we are truly metropolitan; actually possess a real live Chink. He  
will hang out laundry sign in a few days.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Thursday Oct 1 1891 MHS

John Kearney was first victim in G.R.of smallpox in 1881. Died in his  
small shanty near the Grove residence. 16 G.R. whites died in epidemic.

\*\*\*\*\*

1891

Magnet Oct 22 MHS (1891)

First divorce started in Itasca Florence Stoddard vs Charles Stoddard.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Oct 22, 1891 MHS

Indians cannot abide being struck by club in hands of white woman. If you threaten them with a club, though they do not fear a rifle, they'll vamoose and leave you unmolested. Make them think you always have club handy, and they'll stay away from you. Says Mrs. Willman, on Pokegama Lake.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dan W. Doran still running Pokegama Dec 17, 1891. See Magnet that date.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet of Dec 24, 1891 says Duluth daily papers arrive G.R. 3, 4 days after publication.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Dec 31, 1891. MHS

The Lumberman's Bank opens tomorrow, Jan 1, 1892. Officers: C.W. Hastings, prop Windson Hotel, Mpls.; P.J. Sheldon, Owatonna, Minn., v.p. and F.P. Sheldon, cashier.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet March 24, 1892 MHS

Pokegama hotel has installed colored waiters in dining room.

\*\*\*\*

Magnet changed after March 24 issue, 1892, from Thur to Tues as date of publication. Next issue came out Tues., March 29, 1892.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet April 19 1892 MHS

G.R. Water and Elec. Power Co authorized by Congress to build dam at G.R. across Mississippi.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 14, 1892; MHS

"EXCURSION.

"The steamer LITTLE EAGLE will make regular trips every Tuesday to Ball Club Lake and intermediate points, returning next day. She leaves Cohasset at 7 a.m. sharp."

\*\*\*\*\*

June 21, 1892 Magnet gives article from J. Adam Bede's Duluth Data in re Grand Rapids. "THE CAPITAL OF ITASCA" ANNALS file 31, item 1141.

\*\*\*\*\*

1891  
1892



Magnet, ~~June~~ January 24, 1893 MHS

"The Iron Exchange Bank ,Mr.Thomas Gilbert, is now G.R.institution.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Feb 7 1893 MHS

Coliseum Theater opens to public Sat night, ~~11th~~ 4th inst. Large crowd.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Feb 14, 1893 MHS

Northwestern Benefit Assn Hospital opened on 13th. Dr.Manson.

(This was the fake "hospital ticket" scheme.)

\*\*\*\*

Magnet March 7, 1893 MHS

BOSTON GRAND THEATER OPENED Feb 28. Vaudeville.. Sat mats for ladies, with no smoking.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet March 28 1893 MHS

This date finds Doran landlord of the Gladstone hotel instead of the Pokegama.

\*\*\*\*

Magnet March 28, 1893 Last Thursday noon Pokegama hotel burned to ground. That would be the 23rd of March, 1893. Landlord was D.M.Gunn then. Was built in August 1890, Hartley & Gunn were proprietors for less than a year. Mr.Gunn left almost penniless by this fire. Most of the insurance was on building, title to which was in Robert Stratton of Mpls. Doubtful at time if be rebuilt. That \$1500 chemical fire engine gets the razz as "monument of folly."

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet April 4, 1893. MHS

"THE END OF THE SEASON," summary of total cut of logs in the vicinity of G.R. for the season, with loggers' names, and size of crews.

\*\*\*\*\*

1893

Magnet April 4, 1893 MHS

Citizens raised purse of \$3,000 for Gunn to help rebuild Pokegama. The projected new building 100x150 ft, 3 stories high, with 100 ft cellar. Mr. Gunn expects to have it open by Aug 1st.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet April 11, 1893 MHS

Clark Smith's two-year-old pet moose died of eating box of crackers which caked on his stomach. Smith had refused \$250 for him.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet May 30, 1893 MHS

Dr. J. R. Howes sawed first lumber in his new mill last Thursday. Has a capacity of 40,000 ft daily, will employ 25 men.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet May 30, 1893 MHS

Dorcas Society library lets books at Mrs. Beaman's confectionery store at 5 cents for two weeks, or tickets at \$1 per year.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 6, 1893 MHS

Great shortage of residences on rental in G.R. People crowding two families to a house, and a number of people leave town because no house can be had. A company is being formed to buy vacant LaPrairie houses and move them to G.R.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 13, 1893 MHS

New Methodist <sup>church</sup> dedicated 1st week. Enough money raised to pay off debt.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 13 1893 MHS

Boston Grand Theater now under management of Madden & Moore. Vaudeville every night.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 13, 1893 MHS

Recreation grounds of Messrs Logan, Murphy, Fitzgerald and Beaman on Hale Lake dedicated this evening. Property adjoining lake has been beautified. 24x40 foot dance pavillion, bandstand, speakers' stand, lawn tennis court, baseball



diamond, Pleasure boats at dock, Small steam launch soon. Next week bath houses for ladies and gentlemen.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 20, 1893 MHS

Lumbermen's Bank incorporated as LUMBERMEN'S STATE BANK, passing as a private bank. Same officers.

\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 27 1893 MHS

John Lyons seems now to own steamer North Star, as he advertises in this issue an excursion from Cohasset to White Oak Point with a 4th July celeb. and Indian war dances thrown in at \$1 return trip, including special train fare G.R. to Cohasset. Dinner on boat 35 cts.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet June 27 1893 MHS

"CITIZEN" writes caustic letter to Magnet complaining of herds of cattle "roaring, rattling bells and bellowing the whole night long" in G.R. prominent streets, wrecking sleep. Herds of "thirty or forty cattle" make the sleeping hours "hideously horrible," he says. Yells for ordinance.

\*\*\*\*

Magnet Aug 1, 1893 MHS

MERRITT BANKING AND ~~FINANCIAL~~ MERCANTILE COMPANY have an ad. So their new "Mammoth Store" must be completed, and occupied. These men are the Duluth Merritts (mine Merritts)

\*\*\*\*

Magnet Oct 10, 1893 MHS

Itasca County's 2nd annual fair, Oct 5th.

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Oct 24 1893 MHS

Naphtha yacht "ELECTRA" placed in Mississippi. Will carry 20 passengers and make 8 knots per hour. Owned by F.A. Clarkson, of Wells-Stone Merc. Co.,

\*\*\*\*\*

~~Query~~ Query: Did Dr. Howes succeed Dr. Manson in hospital, then to be succeeded in turn by Dr. Rosser, and he by Russell and Ehle? It appears so.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dec 5 1893

Merritt Banking and Mercantile Co opens its banking department with F.T. Bueneman as cashier.

\*\*\*\*\*

1893

Magnet Jan 9 1894 MHS

\*\*\*\* Away back in the sixties there was a rumor of gold in the hills on the northwest shore of Lake Superior. It came originally from the Chippewa Indians, some of whom asserted that there lay about the shores of Vermillion Lake enormous deposits of the precious metal, which they said was the treasure of the great Mesabi, who, according to the legend of the Grand Marias Indians, lay entombed in the Giant's range, the various members of his body being represented by the spurs and subordinate ridges. The regions where the gold was alleged to be would correspond well to the location of the wampum belt on the deified hero, had he possessed the ~~casual proportions~~ colossal proportions that the topography of his apocryphal grave would indicate. The aborigines held the "heights of land" in much awe, and the folk lore indications are that their 'Mesabi' corresponded in a crude way to Atlas\*\*\*\*\*

From the rumors of gold came the discovery of iron on the Vermillion Range near Tower, in St. Louis county. Scientists became convinced that there were two great ranges running in a southwesterly direction, nearly parallel with each other. The trend of the Vermillion was easily traced, but to discover the other was a more difficult task. Outcroppings were traced, but for some years no substantial ore bodies could be found.

In the summer of 1890 the first great discovery on the marvelous Mesabi range was made. Iron ore was discovered adhering to the roots of an upturned tree on Judge Hale's property, on Section 1-58-16. The long expected had been discovered. This gave a new impetus to explorations. It did not take long after this to locate the largest and best bodies of soft hematite ore yet known to the world. \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Jan 9 1894 MHS

"Three miles from Grand Rapids is a realistic sportsman's paradise: It is one of the most beautiful sheets of water in the world, consisting of four arms, and has a continuous coast line of 217 miles. The lake is stored with the choicest supply of fish in inexhaustible quantities. It is studded with beautiful islands; its shores are indented with pictureque bays and coves, broken by projecting capes and headlands; it is timbered to the water's edge, and the adjacent forests are well supplied with large and small game---all combining to make it a most delightful and desirable summer resort. Quite a number of neat cottages now adorn its shores, and others will be added. It will become a great favorite with strangers as the far-famed Lake Minnetonka."

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Jan 9 1894--1894 MHS

"Pokegama Falls is the point in Itasca county where the Mesaba range crosses the Mississippi river, \*\*\*\*\* about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles northwest of G.R. The falls are formed by the waters of the Mississippi passing over a ledge of hard quartzite, which extends about 400 feet upstream and about the same distance below. The recession of the falls has only been about 400 feet, hence they will exist for ages to come without any protection. The fall is about 14 feet, and the mean annual discharge of the Mississippi at this point, being about 1000 cubic feet per second, the horsepower is 1586. 300 feet above the falls is the government reservoir dam, from which the waters of the Mississippi are systematically released. It is a ten-foot dam, and if the water were drawn from its pond the horsepower would be 2718.

1894



The Mississippi river above Pokegama Falls is navigable to the upper end of Cass Lake, a distance of about 110 miles by river. A steamer can go a like distance to Leech Lake, and up the inlet to and across Lake George, in Hubbard county. The thoroughfare into Pokegama Lake is also navigable.\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

Magnet Jan 9 1894

"THE NATIONAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION'S HOSPITAL."

It appears from item on this date that Dr. Manson is running it now.

\*\*\*\*\*

1894

A pr. 26-33

Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 4, 1940

April 26, 1933

County Seat Question

The County Seat Fight in 1892

" \*\*\* The general story seems to be that La Prairie was the county seat of Itasca and that Grand Rapids stole both the county seat and the court house. The statements concerning the court house fight have been greatly exaggerated as time has gone on.

1891  
"La Prairie was never the county seat of Itasca county. It simply wanted to be. When Itasca county was formed in 1891 the second resolution introduced at the first meeting of the board of county commissioners on March 24th of that year declares as follows--'Moved and carried that the town of Grand Rapids, Itasca county, Minnesota, shall be the county seat of Itasca county until changed at the next general election as provided by law.' The wording of this resolution might indicate that some of the people anticipated a change. <sup>★</sup> Another resolution on that same day which was passed by the county board, consisting of L. F. Knox, J. P. Sims and B. C. Finnegan, was as follows--'Moved and carried that this board designate court square, known as block 20, townsite of Grand Rapids, as a location for erecting a building and vault to be used for a county building.'

"The first court house, located on the same block that the present structure now stands, (still on same site, in 1940?) must have been a very simple structure. The contract for the room and vault was let to Lewis J. Jensen of Grand Rapids for the price of \$170. This small frame building was located nearer to the creek than the present court house, and served as the official building of Itasca county for some little time. (Query: Did officers maintain their offices in their homes, stores, or where, during this one-room period?)

★ Can I get the view of any old timers who were pro-La Prairie as to what that "until" really was supposed to mean?



Feb 12-33

Sept. 5, 1940

Feb. 22, 1933

Drinking--Deer River

1900 The neighboring village to the west of Grand Rapids (Deer River) was just getting established in 1900. The Minneapolis & Rainy River railroad had been built for a distance of about 20 miles north, but the community at Deer River was still very small. The Northern Hotel was one of the first hostelries in a town which later had many. The Northern had been built by W. J. Coffron. The Hotel Deer River was also constructed in 1900. Altogether the town looked crude and new in 1900, but Grand Rapids, the county seat, looked equally so.

1900 "Deer River was proud of its school in the year 1900. The first school in Deer River was made of logs and a picture (printed in that year) showed the teacher, Hattie Brooks, with her 16 pupils. The new school building, a frame structure, was built in 1900, and another picture shows A. C. Yoder, who was the principal of the school, and, of course, went by the title of 'professor,' and his pupils. Mr. Yoder was the only teacher though it was stated that the building contained room for four more departments and that it was built in advance of the times to provide for the growing population which Deer River was anticipating.

"Deer River became famous for its hotels but no less famous for the proprietors of some of them. The story is told that the wife of one of the early proprietors used to go into the bar room, which was an essential part of the hotel business, and visit with the lumberjacks who were drinking. Finally some lumberjack would challenge her to a drinking bout. She would put her baby upon the bar and start in. There was not a

Drinking - (continued)

Feb. 22, 1933

lumberjack who could stay on his feet very long against the proprietor's wife. For such feats as this, of course, she made reputation for herself, her husband, and, in fact, for the village.

"Drinking was the most serious business of all in the early days of lumbering communities. That was true of Grand Rapids and it was true of Deer River. The thousands of men who were working in the woods were violent patrons of saloons. They expected to waste their money. However, the early residents of Deer River say that crime in the community, except that which was incidental to drinking, was very small. The women of the community were treated with respect. In fact that was generally the attitude of the lumberjack towards respectable women."

Some of the business men of early Deer River had names that are familiar to the older residents of Grand Rapids: James Quigg had a hotel there; James Everton and his son, W. A. Everton were in the mercantile business, as was A. D. Brooks, with his son P. R. Brooks; Murray Taylor had the combination of operating the Itasca News, as the first publisher of the community, and also acting as postmaster. Members of the Deer River school board were W. J. Coffron, James A. Wollford, and C. M. Robinson. Fred Churchill was a very prominent citizen of Deer River at the turn of the century. He went to Deer River from La Prairie, and, besides running the Hotel Deer River, he engaged in logging operations. The railroad serving Deer River in the early days of the twentieth century was the Eastern Minnesota, which was later purchased by the Great Northern.

In those days the sole industry of Deer River was logging. The whole section depended upon that. Only about a dozen farmers were in the entire neighborhood. Settlement was just starting to creep into the territory to the north. Bigfork was

Drinking - (continued)

Feb. 22, 1933

2  
1900  
to  
1912-13  
unknown, its timber still uncut and its lands absolutely undeveloped. In the period of 1900 to 1910, and a few years later, Deer River was a community of intense activity. As high as 1500 men a day would come into the community on their way to the logging camps in the fall and these men would pour into the village when the winter's work was over. Everyone in trade in the community transacted business on a wholesale scale. It is probable that the community has a more stable support from the agricultural wealth that was hardly mentioned in the days of the big trees.



May 24-33

Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 4, 1940

May 24, 1933

Roads and Bridges

(Query: how far--in miles & fractions--is it from Grand Rapids townsite to the Pokegama government dam? Are any streams crossed on the road connecting these points?)

1887  
" \*\*\* One of the first acts of the board of commissioners which governed the Aitkin-Itasca combination was to set aside the sum of \$2,809.22 for use on the highways of this section in 1887.

"The first road contract let in what is now Itasca county was awarded to Sidney McDonald, who agreed to build a road from Grand Rapids 'To the government dam at Pokegama falls.' His contract was in part in the following language, which included specifications: 'Cutting and grubbing out the trees and brush to a uniform width of 33 feet. Bridge all waterways with sufficient stringers of logs, and covering same with poles, spotted down, which shall not be less than six inches in diameter and not less than 14 feet in length, and filling all low spots with corduroy poles not less than 14 feet in length. The contractor shall grade down all hillocks and knolls, and make the road passable at all times, and complete the same on or before October 15, 1887.' This work was done for an agreed price of \$250, and must have been satisfactory, for there is a later entry showing this payment made in full.

"One of the important roads leading from Grand Rapids served to accommodate the lumbermen who had camps established north of this village, along the Prairie river and its tributaries. The loggers built most of their tote roads themselves, but in cases where the roads were of benefit to large numbers of people, received aid from the county. Thus we find a payment of \$750 made to J. P. Sims for work done



Roads and Bridges - (continued)

May 24, 1933

2  
1889  
on the road between Grand Rapids and Big Trout Lake.

"Early settlers in Grand Rapids were without a bridge over the Mississippi river here. The minutes of the meeting of the county board held May 29, 1889, show a petition signed by Charles Kearney and 28 others asking for a wagon bridge over the Mississippi in this village. Bids were invited, and the contract let to A. Y. Baynes and Company for sum of \$4,350. W. V. Fuller, an early settler here, had charge of grading the approaches, which cost all of \$61.50. Labor was paid two dollars a day, and a man who furnished a team and wagon with his services only received four dollars a day.

1889  
"Tote roads leading to Prairie Lake were not good enough for general traffic by the close of the year 1889, so 34 local citizens signed a petition asking for a road to the lake, which would reach the site of the old dam at the foot of the upper lake. The road was ordered surveyed.

1889  
"Far sighted citizens saw the need for linking up short pieces of highway as early as 1889, so in the latter part of that year the county commissioners received a petition for a county road to extend from the mouth of Bass Brook at Cohasset, through Grand Rapids and Akeley, which latter place soon became a part of La Prairie, to the mouth of Blackberry Brook. Early surveys indicated that the route was feasible, and construction was authorized.

"Roads and bridges were constructed at much less cost than than now, for when bids were invited for an iron bridge over Prairie river 'below the dam,' or near the site of the present power house, (ascertain if P. H. is there in 1940) there were several bidders, S. M. Hewitt was successful, his price being \$1,287. ★

"Farmers south of town wanted roads to enable them to get to market, and local people wanted to drive to the lake. Chas. Kearney, John Beckfelt, Duncan

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★ What year was this bridge built?

## Roads and Bridges - (continued)

May 24, 1933

Harris, Anthony McAlpine and a number of others signed a petition asking for a road out to the lake from the new bridge over the Mississippi. Prompt action was taken, for the county commissioners accepted the petition, granted it, and ordered the road laid out, all in one short day.

"Splendid paved roads now lead across the range, but in the early history of the county there were no roads across those hills, where the presence of iron ore was but suspected. Some exploration work had been done in Iron Range township, not named then, and the site called the Diamond mine. The location was north of the present road between Taconite and Marble, and about half way between those points. A petition for a road from La Prairie to the Diamond mine was granted on June 25, 1890, and work ordered started. Specifications were much the same as those given earlier.

"These early records sometimes have a touch of unconscious humor. One road petition placed before the commissioners at an early date came from a large group of settlers living some miles west of Cohasset. This petition set forth at some length the hardships which the settlers were undergoing and asked for help. The county board thereupon voted to have the proposed highway surveyed, and told the petitioners that they would be permitted to clear the road and work it, in order to provide themselves an outlet to market. It was intimated that those who needed the road should build it, without asking public help except for the survey.

"Itasca county has always been generous to the unfortunate. One of the early entries shows payment to L. D. Bryant of \$11.34 for taking care of Pat O'Halloran. Records a year later show the expense of interring the remains of O'Halloran."



June 7-33

Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. June 7, 1933  
Vol. XLII-49

Grand Rapids History  
Mr. Sumner  
Oct. 17th, 1940

"UP IN THIS NECK OF THE WOODS. - Grand Rapids has many spots of natural beauty. This village also has many places where nature may be improved upon, and natural beauty aided by man. Several examples of the latter can be seen along the creek which flows down through the village from Hale lake to the Mississippi river. In a number of places people living along the creek have taken advantage of natural conditions, improved them, and made wonderfully attractive parks.

The most noteworthy example of aiding nature and creating a beauty spot is well known. This is the James Connell property along Pokegama avenue a block south of the high school grounds. Here, during the past ten or twelve years, a great deal of work has been done, and each year there is an improvement. The grounds were first leveled off, the creek somewhat straightened, and confined within low walls of stone, then planting was started, with an eye to the later appearance of the property. Native trees, with some evergreens, such as blue spruce, secured from nurseries, with fruit trees, flowering shrubs, and perennial flowers, have created a park which is an illustration of what may be accomplished with hard work and a sense of beauty and proportion.

In several other places the course of the brook through Grand Rapids has been improved. Parking and planting has been done at the A. L. Thwing home, on the grounds next the Community church. Swan Sandin has improved the flat through which the brook runs at his place, and has developed an island, some miniature bridges, and



June 7-33

Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. June 7, 1933 - continued

other novel and pleasing effects.

Some work has been done in other places in the villiage than along the brook, to develop natural beauty spots. On Forest lake, in the west part of the villiage, Archie McDougal and sons have parked out a long section of the lake shore near their place, leaving the trees which were needed for shade. A diving platform and boat landing, built by the McDougals, are used by the public without charge."

G. H. Hause 10/14/40

June 21-33

P. 1. Col. 1.  
Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. June 21, 1933  
Vol. XLII-51

UP IN THIS NECK OF THE WOODS. - Much of historical interest attaches to the principal industry in Grand Rapids, the Blandin Paper Company mill. The people living in the present generation cannot realize that there was a time, not so many years ago, when the mill was not in existence, or that earnest and constant effort on the part of the public spirited citizens was necessary before the water power at Grand Rapids was developed.

Search of historical documents shows that at least two men now living were active in securing the development of water power here, together with other pioneers, that they expended time, money and effort to bring capital here without thought of financial betterment to themselves, and that public money was used in successful efforts to bring the potential source of power to the attention of

May 17-33

Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 4, 1940

May 17, 1933

### Gambling

In the early days in Itasca there was considerable gambling. There was not as much in the lumbering sections as there was in the mining regions. Mining camps seem always to be strong for gambling, but lumber camps went more for drinking.

1900's  
79  
"Around Grand Rapids and Deer River were several gambling institutions, however, throughout all the earlier life of these communities. Grand Rapids had several gambling places, most of them connected with saloons. Back in the early 1900's 'Nigger Alex,' so called because he doubtless had some Negro blood and a dark complexion, operated successfully as a gambler in Grand Rapids. There were a good many others who made most of their living from their ability to play cards.

"The visitor in Grand Rapids many years ago would have found plenty of chance to lose his money. If he had stepped into a saloon he would have seen on one side a row of slot machines from a nickel to a dollar. Passing back further he might have found a gambling table or two and a roulette wheel. Roulette wheels were quite common and there were several of them between the two communities.

"Sometimes some pretty big games would be in progress \*\*\*. A thousand dollars would be seen quite often on the table. Most of the sums, however, were considerably smaller as a large number of those who played were not in the big money class.

"The games that were played were those common to most gamblers. Stud and draw poker were the most common games. Blackjack, which those who read western tales know most about, was seldom played here. \*\*\* There were several other card games \*\*\* and there were some games with dice. Particularly important was the game of Klondike,



Gambling - (continued)

May 17, 1933

played with dice on a table. In this game money could be lost quite rapidly.

"The lumberjack was not essentially a cardplayer. He was interested in other things. The minute he came to town he wanted a drink. There are several reasons why lumberjacks were interested in drinking. They had worked in the woods for several months. They had lived on the food of the lumber camps, which was very much the same from day to day, designed to sustain men at swinging an axe and dragging the saw. They had bunked in the lumber camp with its more or less uncomfortable circumstances. Their work had been monotonous, early to bed and early to rise. In most camps drinking was strictly prohibited and thus even a normal appetite for strong liquors would be excited by the prospect of a change and a drink. The minute the lumberjack got to town he started for the saloon, and the saloon keeper was ready for him. Stepping up to the bar he would take a few large drinks. As a result he would soon be drunk, and when he was drunk he was not interested in cards." (a wise system which should be, but seldom is, followed by city sports)

"Some lumberjacks who drank less would play cards, usually to their sorrow. \*\*\* Grand Rapids had about a half dozen men who made their living off gambling. These men were smooth gentlemen who knew their cards. It cannot be said that they were necessarily 'crooked' gamblers, but they knew so much more about cards than the people with whom they played that they took the money. Off seasons these men would play for smaller stakes and wherever they could find a game. \*\*\* They would all be set, however, when the camps broke up, and if they broke up gradually, leaving quite a large number of men in the community for some time, it was a favorable season for the gamblers. The stakes for which the lumberjacks played were obviously not large. Most of them were large enough to leave the men from the woods much the loser after a few evening of play.

"The larger gamblers of the communities were the lumbermen, those who were

Gambling - (continued)

May 17, 1933

engaged in the logging business as employers. Some of these men were real gamblers and would do well in the best of company with cards or dice. When they would get together to play cards the stakes would be big. A thousand dollars would be lost one evening and it might be won back the next.

"Gambling was done in several places. It was usually a side line of some saloon and it is not known that there were any special gambling houses that were elaborately equipped. But there were plenty of games and every time a play was made a proportion of it went to the house. This proportion was large enough to take about all the capital that was put into a small game in a few hours.

"In the woods some of the lumber camps would not allow any card playing. It was felt that it kept the men up late and created some little excitement. The best conducted camps allowed no gambling under any consideration, though some of them would allow cards and Sunday would be spent in smear or cribbage. \*\*\*



May 10-33

Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 4, 1940

May 10, 1933

### Log Driving

"Log driving called for skill on the part of the workmen. It was a dangerous occupation, with long hours and hard labor, but it was well paid. When wages in the woods were \$30 per month, loggers who went on the drive received \$2.50 per day and board, which meant four meals a day. These were called breakfast, served about four o'clock in the morning, first lunch at half past nine, second lunch at half past two, and supper, any time from eight to nine in the evening. One illustration of the long hours has become a classic. A prospective driver, being hired in Grand Rapids, asked Al Powers, superintendent, if there was much lost time on his drive, meaning if much time would be lost by reason of head winds. Mr. Powers responded, 'No, very little, only from twelve to two.' While very few men worked 22 hours per day, an eighteen-hour day was very common. The logs had to move downstream when there was water enough to float them, and every day was important.

"Log driving had its own vocabulary. Today there are men living in the northern woods who have never seen a pair of well calked boots, which in the old days scarred the floors of the thirst emporiums in the river towns. These sharp steel calks in the soles of the shoes enabled the skilled river driver to work with unconcern on the floating logs which would turn and dump the unwary into the cold water.

"The floating houseboats in which the men slept, and where the cooking was done, were termed 'wanigans.' Then there were 'jargoes', the flat boats which took down the last logs of the floating rear. 'Sacking' was hard work, and meant pulling out the logs left in the logans and on the meadows by the falling water. In

\* the American Indian "wangan." It is  
ced "won'-nigan."  
of this name undetermined.  
water, or "eat hole."

Log Driving - (continued)

May 10, 1933

the narrow streams a drive might be held up by a 'gillpoke,'<sup>★★★★</sup> which was when a long stick of timber jammed crosswise of the stream and blocked passage. A log driver had to watch out for 'sweepers,'<sup>●</sup> not armed with brooms, but trees or poles projecting out over the water, apt to catch an unwary man who was riding down on a log. Many other terms used in log driving have passed into the literature and the vocabulary of the north woods.

" \*\*\* Now there is not a stick of timber floating down the Bigfork, the last stream to give way to improved highways and railroads as a means of transportation for timber."

★★★★ Name source not known.  
● A name coined by rivermen.



May 3-33

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Ascertain if there are any fish hatcheries in Grand Rapids, and, if so, get some interesting data on hatching and planting. If none in Grand Rapids, see if I can tie the Cutfoot hatchery up with Grand Rapids or its history in an interesting manner.

April 5-33

Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 5, 1940

April 5, 1933

Bob Mosemo -- Smallpox

(Indian appreciation and good will)

"We had a call from an Indian chief the other day. It was Bob Mosemo from Inger who came to see us. He had been down to call upon his friend, Mike McAlpine, and express the regret of the Indians at Mr. McAlpine's sickness. For many years Mike McAlpine has been a real friend of all of the Indians. Nearly every fall he has gone around the community and gathered up some clothes for them, and has helped them out in every possible way. Bob Mosemo came down as an official representative, as it were, of the Chippewas, to express good wishes.

"A generation or more ago the authority of the Indian chiefs was very definite. It was recognized by the federal government in dealing with the Indians. That time has passed, however, and the only recognition an Indian chief now gets is from his own tribe members, and that is somewhat limited. Bob Mosemo is the head of the Indians of the Inger-Winnibigoshish section. He represents them on various occasions and he has many duties to do throughout the course of the year. For instance, he tells them when they can begin to harvest the wild rice. Since the chief belongs to the old Indian religion he is the head of the medicine dance and looks after all arrangements in connection with the events of that nature.

"Bob Mosemo is about 80 years of age. (this in 1933) His father was Makeci which in English would mean Eagle. The old chief fought against the Sioux when the Indians of the south came against the Chippewas many years ago. On the chief's death Bob's brother became the chief, and on the death of the brother, about 1918, Bob became the recognized leader of the Indians.

1918



Bob Mosemo-Smallpox - (continued)

April 5, 1933

*1881-2*  
"We asked the old chief about the smallpox epidemic of the winter of 1881-82. He knew all about it. In fact, his first wife died from the smallpox on Winnibigoshish and the husband of his present wife also succumbed. In all, Chief Mosemo says that 77 Indians died at Winnibigoshish dam. The smallpox played particular havoc among the Indians largely because of their methods of living. There was, of course, no artificial immunity among the Indians, and very little among the white people of the section at that time. Indians would also move from place to place when they might be suffering from the disease, and when this happened in cold weather it was very bad for the sick people.

"The story of the start of the smallpox epidemic is interesting. We have understood that the first case of smallpox was at a camp or stopping place at the head of Big Trout Lake. One afternoon two lumberjacks who were bound for the Bigfork country were walking north. When they neared the Trout Lake camp they met a man and his wife, who were in charge of the camp, coming towards Grand Rapids. The woman was sick. The lumberjacks stayed overnight at the camp, cooking their own meals and sleeping in one of the beds. In the morning when they left they helped themselves to two of the blankets, thinking they might be handy in the camp up north. They were the blankets on the bed in which the woman, who was later found to have smallpox, had been sleeping. The coming of the lumberjacks and the blankets to the Caldwell (or ~~Golwell~~) camp on the Bigfork led to the infection of a large number of people, and from the illness of this camp the disease spread very rapidly. It entered other logging camps. It was especially bad with the Indians, and hundreds of people died.

"There was no doctor in Grand Rapids at the time. The community was very small and into it came very many sick people. Those who had had the smallpox helped to take

*This isn't the timber thing, Colwell, on the  
at that time, whose whole camp and timber  
was confiscated by the government.*

Bob Mosemo - Smallpox - (continued)

April 5, 1933

care of those who were ill. Over across the river a pest-house was built. At it many people died and they were buried along the south side of the river. It is quite likely that if the remains of human beings are unearthed (there) today they may be what is left of some of the smallpox victims of nearly sixty years ago.

"There were many cases of smallpox throughout all northern Minnesota. The sickness became so violent that in Aitkin and Brainerd armed men stood upon the highways and would not allow strangers to enter these communities. There were hundreds of deaths and wherever there was any possibilities of treatment the Indians and other people assembled for the purpose of seeking some relief. The disease, however, was in a very violent form. It was the kind of smallpox which claims a very large percentage of its victims.

*1881-2*  
The first doctor to come into Itasca came at about the time of this epidemic. Dr. Walker was in charge of those who were engaged in building the dams \*\*\* in this section. The Pokegama and Winnibigoshish dams were then being constructed. The men there were quarantined. The Indians came to both dams seeking any assistance that might be given them there. Here they were provided with fuel and food through the efforts of their white friends or through the efforts of other members of their tribe.

*1881-2*  
"The epidemic of 1881-82 was the only serious epidemic of smallpox that Itasca county has had. There were smallpox scared quite frequently and some few deaths would be recorded. (any epidemics since 1933?) Vaccination, however, became established and immunity from the disease was gradually built up. At the time of the Spanish-American War there was another epidemic in this section but only one death was reported in the vicinity of Grand Rapids."



Apr 12-33

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Sept. 3, 1940

April 12, 1933

The Finns

1893<sup>e</sup>  
"The first Finnish people to come to Itasca county arrived about 1893. They came in following the panic of 1893. At that time there was little employment and the Finnish people from the mining and industrial centers of the Great Lakes section struck out for the land. Among those first to come was the Gran family." (Frank Gran is now on splendid farm near Trout Lake, if alive - check) ★

"The hardships of these early people were almost indescribable. They came to a new country in which there were no roads, and the food supplies for the crude homesteads were packed in on the backs of the industrious settlers. It is recorded that in those earlier years the only food that was available at times were the rabbits which were snared. But it did not take the Finnish people long to make homes. Their experience in the old country was on the <sup>same</sup> type of land found here. They knew how to use the saw and axe, how to build homes and clear the land. The result was the rapid development of some of the finest agricultural sections in northern Minnesota.

1898<sup>e</sup>  
"John Oakes of Wawina was one of the first settlers in that section. He came in 1898 and was a leader of a Finnish movement into that part of the Swan River valley. \*\*\* He had learned to classify and to tell the value of lands. He saw that in northeastern Minnesota there was adequate rainfall and rich lands if they were chosen properly. It was this factor which led him to settle at Wawina and to help bring other people into that section.

"In a recent visit to the Herald-Review office, Mr. Oakes confirmed the truth of an editorial which had appeared in the Herald-Review concerning the Finnish people and their demands for relief. He well remembers that as a youth a large number

★ Is the Gran in the attorney General's office a member of this family?

The Finns - (continued)

April 12, 1933

of people went to St. Petersburg, as the capital of Russia was then known, and asked for relief of various kinds. Some of the things they asked for were greater civil liberties. Others were for more food and an opportunity to escape from the slavery which was an existing condition in Russia. Among those who called upon the Czar were some Polish people and a large number of Finnish people, some of them from the vicinity of Mr. Oake's home. The answer of the Czar to the people was about the one which would be expected. He turned his soldiers loose upon the petitioners and about a thousand of them were shot down upon the streets of St. Petersburg.

"Naturally the Finnish people in this section partake of the characteristics of the Finns in their own country. \*\*\*"

In the main they are conservative, here, though about a quarter of them are radicals and have no time for either Finnish or American institutions. They do not read English papers, they have no confidence in the government of the United States. They are constantly seeking to break up any form of government and will support communism in any form where it is found.

1913<sup>c</sup>  
"The movement towards radical education of the Finnish people in American started about 1913. The Finns took readily to the doctrines of Socialism as they were preached quite extensively a generation ago, and later were leaders in the I. W. W. movement which had a large following in the mining section. Later the Finns divided into co-operative societies. These organizations had some merit from the standpoint of their membership, but were the rallying places of those who wished to express communistic doctrines. The theories of Communism made an immediate impression upon the radical Finnish people and they have adopted the principles of these new teachings and support them at all times.



The Finns - (continued)

April 12, 1933

1932  
"No one from the Wawina section went to Russia according to Mr. Oakes. He showed us, however, a letter from the daughter of a woman who went to Russia about a year ago. (in 1932) The daughter told of hearing from her mother and said she was leaving the Soviet states for Finland as conditions in Russia were 'terrible.' Quite a number of people from the Mesaba range left for Russia and we have not heard of the progress they are making. They sold and sacrificed their properties and were made quite substantial inducements by the Soviet government. How the promises were kept we do not yet know. (Find out by the G. R. Herald-Review later files)

"It is true that the most interesting thing about the Finns is the contrast among the various groups. Some Finnish people are short and dark. Others are tall and light. Some are extremely radical in their political ideas. Others are sound and conservative. One group is strongly for temperance and peace. Another drinks, and uses short, curved, sharp knives. One group goes to church. Another does not care for religion. One group is strictly honest in its business relationships. The other is smooth and tricky.

"These contrasts have not been developed in the United States." (Note: How does the editor arrive at this conclusion? Every trait mentioned, and every contrast noted, has been observed by every Finn who ever came to the U. S., because these same characteristics mark America's native population exactly as he has attributed them to the Finn. Short, tall, light, dark, radical, conservative (in political ideas), temperate, intemperate, peaceful, quarrelsome, religious, non-religious, honest, tricky--these are not variations of Finnish characteristics, nor Swedish, nor Irish, nor English, but variations of human characteristics.) "They (these characteristics) have been brought here from Finland and Russia. Many who have had radical ideas when they came to the United States have retained them."

Sept. 3, 1940

Apr 19-33  
April 19, 1933

Original Itasca Co.

"Itasca county was one of the original counties of Minnesota. In the days before statehood the territory of Minnesota was divided into ~~five~~ <sup>9</sup> counties. Itasca was one of them. It extended from Mille Lacs north to the Canadian border and from the source of the Mississippi to Lake Superior to include what later became Duluth.

<sup>c</sup>  
1887  
"What happened to the county during the period from statehood to 1887 we do not know (find out) but in the year 1887 Itasca came back onto the map of Minnesota. It included the area now known as Itasca and Koochiching. It did not, however, at that time have an independent county existence. It was carved out of Crow Wing county along with what is now Aitkin county, and both Aitkin and Itasca were administered by one county government known as Aitkin-Itasca county.

<sup>c</sup>  
1887  
"This peculiar arrangement was authorized by the Minnesota legislature on February 26, 1887, and shortly thereafter the Aitkin-Itasca board of county commissioners began its work. The proceedings of this early board were signed by E. B. Lowell, chairman of the board of county commissioners. Most of the activities of the county board consisted of granting liquor licenses and permits for logging dams across rivers. The bills which were allowed by this early board were very small. In the later years of its administration, Grand Rapids and La Prairie were active communities. Grand Rapids, however, did not wish to have La Prairie a village, and La Prairie blocked the formation of the village of Grand Rapids for two or three years.

"It is evident from the early records that there were two county boards



Original Itasca Co. - (continued)

April 19, 1933

at one time, for in the court house are found some proceedings of a county board of Itasca county which are co-incident with the proceedings of the Aitkin-Itasca board. It is obvious that this other effort to govern this section was declared illegal in later court actions.

1891  
"Itasca county combined what is now known as Itasca and Koochiching, which was later detached, and came into official existence on March 7, 1891, when the Minnesota legislature created the county and authorized the appointment of the first board of county commissioners. The governor of Minnesota appointed a board of three members of which L. F. Knox was chairman and J. P. Sims and B. C. Finnegan were members. This board met for the first time on March 24, 1891, and thereupon transacted the first official business of the new county.

"At that first meeting, which occupied both the 24th and 25th of March, several resolutions were adopted. One of them declared that Grand Rapids was to be the county seat. Another designated the location of the court house. Another voted \$25,000 for the expense of the county for a year. Other resolutions appointed the county officers whose salaries were set at what appears now to be quite a low figure.

"The first county auditor of Itasca county, after its separate organization, was H. R. King. \*\*\* John Beckfelt was the first county treasurer. Charles Kearney was the first register of deeds, and Henry W. Canfield was the first county attorney. Wade Blaker was the first clerk of court, and E. R. Lewis the first county surveyor. **and T. R. Pravitz was appointed county** M. A. Woods was appointed assessor for the county superintendent of schools.

"The first year of activity of the new county board and county officers was very important. The county records had to be set up and the first year saw the completion of the county government and the creation of the village of Grand Rapids. A

Original Itasca Co. - (continued)

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year or two later Cohasset became a village and then Deer River. ~~The county board and county officers was very important. The county records had to be set up and the first year saw the completion of the county government and the creation of the village of Grand Rapids. A year or two later Cohasset became a village and then Deer River.~~

1892 <sup>c</sup> < The first election in the county was the regular election of 1892 and the proceedings contained the names of the judges and clerks of election at about 20 precincts throughout the county. At that election La Prairie tried to become the county seat, but Grand Rapids won. The first road petitions in Itasca were received within a few weeks after organization of the county. In fact, some small amount of miscellaneous road work had been started by the county commissioners previous to the separate organization of Itasca county.

? "A picture of Grand Rapids at the time of the organization of the county would show a very crude community. It was the terminus of the railroad. A bridge had just been built across the Mississippi. The whole town was crowded along the river. Most of the buildings were of logs. A good part of the business enterprises were saloons. The chief industry of the section was logging and that was all that any one seemed to be interested in.

"There was evidently, according to the records of the time, plenty of politics in the new county. Grand Rapids had to save its position as the county seat and La Prairie had to put up an effort to get the honor for itself. Villages and school districts were being formed with their interesting contests. Altogether those were very interesting days, those early days of Itasca.

(Of those first board members and county officers, who, if any, are alive in 1940?)



-7-  
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$\frac{1}{2}$  moneyed men. All this happened only a third of a century ago, well within the memory of many men now living.

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1899

1899<sup>a</sup>  
In the year 1899 a corporation was formed, called the Grand Rapids Power and Boom Company. The incorporators were H. D. Powers and John Costello now living and D. M. Gunn, John Beckfelt, D. W. Doran, L. F. Knox and George F. Meyers. Congressman Page Morris introduced a bill in the House in Washington, in January of 1899, which would authorize the newly formed company to construct a dam and bridge over the Mississippi river at Grand Rapids. This measure passed without difficulty, but contained a provision that actual construction must be started within one year.

1900<sup>b</sup>

Efforts to interest capital in the new venture were not successful at first, and in January, 1900, H. D. Powers and D. M. Gunn went to Chicago to bring to moneyed interests the value of water power on the upper Mississippi. Their efforts met with some success, for on Feb. 12, of that year, a special car was set off at Grand Rapids, and Louis W. Hill, vice president of the Great Western road, with W. D. Boyce of Chicago and other men of affairs, made personal investigation of the local situation.

1900<sup>c</sup>

In the meantime, the year during which the incorporators were to start development was about to expire, and on Feb. 9, 1900, a bill was introduced by Senator Knute Nelson, extending the time for constructing the dam four more years. One reason for granting the ex-

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1900 - continued

June 21 33

tension was that time must be given for cruising the territory tributary to the mill to ascertain the amount of pulpwood which could be secured if a paper mill was built here. This measure was passed, and the incorporators <sup>newed</sup> received their efforts to interest capital in the venture.

1901

One year later, or in January, 1901, the Itasca Paper Company was formed, the power site taken over, and preparations were made to start building the dam. The first officers of the Itasca Paper Company were Frank F. Becker, president; L. Lindaner, vice president; H. G. Becker, secretary; and A. C. Bossard treasurer and resident manager. All the officers were from Kankana, Wisconsin. Some of them, including Mr. Bossard and H. G. Becker immediately made Grand Rapids their permanent homes, and took important places in the life of the village.

1901

The first carload of machinery to be used in the construction of the dam was delivered in late January of 1901. This included power drills, hoists, cables, and other equipment. The specifications for the dam stated that it was to be 130 feet long, with a base 78 feet wide. Immediate employment was given to a large number of men, and excavation for the foundation of the dam started.

The work preparing the site for the dam was pushed with such vigor that the first stone in the dam was laid, with some local attention to ceremony, on May 16. High water in the river delayed building operations, and while it had been expected that the machinery would be in place for paper making late in the summer, it was not until late the following



June 21-33

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1901 - continued

winter that the first print paper was turned out.

1902

The machinery for making paper, several carloads of it, reached Grand Rapids in January, 1902, a year after the Itasca Paper Company was formed. Expert millwright appeared, and the erection of the machinery was pushed as rapidly as possible.

Feb. 19, 1902, was a most important date in Grand Rapids.

On that date the power was turned on, and the first print paper came from the machines. Grinding of spruce pulp had started several days earlier, so a supply of pulp was ready. Surplus pulp was being shipped to a mill at Cloquet. During the first few days of operation, the mill turned out 12 tons every 24 hours. The first orders for car loads of paper were received from Chicago and Kansas City, and shipment made during February. The capacity of the mill in that early day was small indeed, when compared to the production now. The Blandin Paper Company produces, when the mill is being operated to capacity, 140 tons of news print paper every day, or more than ten times the daily output of the Itasca Paper Company in its first year.

During the World war period, the St. Paul Pioneer Press - Dispatch and C. K. Blandin became interested in the Itasca Paper Company, to assure a constant supply of print paper. With the sale of the newspapers, Mr. Blandin retained his interests in the paper mill, the name was changed to the Blandin Paper Company, and the program of expansion so familiar to Grand Rapids was inaugurated."

P. 1. Col. 1.  
Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. Aug. 9, 1933 Vol. XLIII -6  
1917

Aug 9-33

1917 ✓  
When the United States entered the war William Whaling of Grand Rapids was one of the first boys in. He enlisted the first of May 1917. He thought he would see some action with the Marines and he guessed right.

Captain Whaling went from Grand Rapids to Mare Island where he enlisted as a private. He stayed there until November 1st when he went across with the second division of the Marine Brigade. The Marines got into the heaviest fighting. No part of the military forces of the United States fought harder and suffered more. The Sixth Regiment, to which William Whaling belonged, was replaced about six times. It took about 18,000 men to keep this unit at its fighting force of 3,000. Some companies lost nearly all of their men in severe engagements.

William Whaling was in every one of the important engagements where the Marines were found. He was at St. Mihiel, the Meuse, the Argonne, Chateau Thierry, the Marne, Monte Blanc and a long list of disastrous engagements. He was made a second lieutenant at St. Mihiel. This young man from Grand Rapids went through all of these engagements. He seemed to bear a charmed life. At Belleau Wood he was gassed and wounded slightly. But he went through the war to the day before the Armistice when he was sent back from the front lines with an ulcerated tooth. He received several personnel citations.

1919 ✓  
After the Armistice Lieutenant Whaling went to Germany with the Army of Occupation. He was there about six months and he returned to the United States in 1919. It was then he decided he would remain



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Wed. Aug. 9, 1933  
1919 - continued

with the Marine Corps. He chose to follow military work as a life career and that he made a wise choice has been demonstrated by elevation and promotion to his present standing. After entering the service permanently Captain Whaling served for awhile aboard ship.

1922  
1923

For awhile in 1922 and 1923 he was in pistol contests for he had already won repute as a ~~worksman~~ <sup>man</sup>. In the winter of 1923-1924 he was

1924

on the U. S. S. Maryland and 1924 he was on the Olympic pistol team. That year he shot in both the Olympic, where he stood, and in the International contest where he ranked third. Returning to the United States he entered the National matches at Camp Perry where he took first place.

We do not know what Captain Whaling's score <sup>was</sup> in these contests. The target is about 150 feet distant and the bull's eye is about two inches in diameter. To hit the bull's eye counts ten and the rings around it are successively nine, eight and down to one. We have understood that Captain Whaling shoots in the nineties for ten shots which means that it is the bull's eye or the rings next to it all the time.

1924

After the pistol contests were over Captain and Mrs. Whaling visited their parents in Grand Rapids and in October in 1924 they left for China. For twenty seven months William Whaling was on duty at the American Legation at Peking. He liked China and the service in the foreign lands usually has many pleasant features. In 1927 Mare Island where 'Cork' Whaling began his military service saw him again.

1927

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Wed. Aug. 9, 1933  
1928 - continued

The year 1928 was one of excitement. The Marines were called to Nicaragua. Here was the real service, quite in contrast to that in France but with plenty of action. The enemy was fighting in the woods, and the woods of Central America are dense, hot, wet jungles. William Whaling was wet to the skin most of the time and carrying out military work was hard and unhealthful.

1930 The expedition of Nicaragua took about 18 months of a Marine's time. Following this experience there were some more shooting contests in the United States and early in 1930 there came the word to go to Haiti.

1936 Haiti is a republic which has asked the United States to do some things for her. One of these was to train the native police and for a period ending in 1936 the United States has assumed charge of the training of the native constabulary. It is particularly interesting that two young men from Grand Rapids should both be engaged in this work. The other was Edwin Farrell, now in service in Washington. He was another young man who stuck by the Marines. They speak French and Captain Whaling's orders are all given in a tongue somewhat new to him but which he has heard in various parts of the world for the last 15 years. He has about 300 men in the group which he is training and while they are not always obedient to black officers they obey the Marines. The work is not unpleasant and Haiti is not a disagreeable place to live. The climate is not oppressively hot and the winters are not much different than summer except for the heavy rainfall. Captain and Mrs. Whaling and their son returned last month from a visit to Grand Rapids to continue their



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1935 - continued

residence in Haiti until the Captain's assignment there is finished.

No one could live much further from the ocean than does a man in Grand Rapids there is nothing in this 'Neck of the Woods' to stimulate interest in military affairs. 'Cork' Whaling has been a very successful soldier and he told us that he is going to stay by the Marines for the rest of his life.

G. H. Hause 10/15/40

Aug 16-33

P. 1. Col. 1  
Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. Aug. 16, 1933 Vol. XLIII-7

Early records of towns, villages, cities and the like are valuable. They enable history to be written accurately, and property to be legally and safely transferred. The earliest record of Itasca County property in existence has probably been unearthed with the discovery of a plat, recorded before Minnesota was a state.

Some time ago when L. W. Huntley, register of deeds, was transcribing some papers in Little Falls, county seat of Morrison county, the register of deeds handed him a plat, saying that it concerned lands now in Itasca county, it might as well be here. The map revealed as a plat of 'East and West Pokegama, located on the east and west banks of the Mississippi River at Pokegama Falls.'

1857

Away back in 1857, when Minnesota was still a territory, and the nearest organized county was Morrison county, four men saw a potential city at Pokegama Falls, where the government dam west of Grand Rapids was later built. The land had never been surveyed, but these four men,

Aug 16 - 33

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Wed. Aug. 16, 1933  
1857 - continued

Lyman C. and M. N. Dayton, and G. A. and H. M. Cameron, engaged Campbell Beall, a civil engineer and land surveyor, to survey and lay out a town site on each bank of the Mississippi river. This was done, and the plat was duly recorded in Morrison county on June, 1857.

Nothing was ever done with the plat. When the government surveys were made, some fifteen years or so later, no recognition was given to the plat of 'East and West Pokegama,' and the United States government kept title to the land on either side of the falls, later building the dam at that point in the interests of navigation.

So far as can be ascertained, the Dayton brothers who were part owners of the plat of a city in the wilderness, were of the same family as were the men who later built and developed the large retail store in Minneapolis which now bears their name. They were pioneers in the territory of Minnesota, at all events."

G. H. Hause 10/15/40

P. 1. Col. 1  
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Wed. Aug. 23, 1933 Vol. XLIII-8

Aug 23 - 33

Taxidermy was once quite an important art and industry up in the neck of the woods.

Along about 25 years ago probably about a half a dozen men were engaged in Grand Rapids in the mounting of heads, animals, fish and birds. There was a considerable demand for the skill of the taxidermist and quite a ready market for many of the things which he



Aug 23 - 33

Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. Aug. 23, 1933 - continued

made. The hunter wished some of his best trophies saved for the future, rugs from the furs of wolves and bears were in demand and the hard drink emporiums of the day made quite a strong demand for the many pronged deer or the wide antlered moose head.

One of the men who has had a large experience in taxidermy is J. D. Anthony. He came to Grand Rapids from Iowa to work here for William Weitzel who for many years engaged in the fur business in Grand Rapids. As a youth Mr. Anthony became interested in taxidermy. There was some business in the Iowa community but most of it was sent in from other states. One day Jess Anthony received a shipment of some elk horns, mountain sheep and mountain goats, He had never seen any of these animals in their wild state but he did the best he could for his western customer. Following a few experiences of this kind he felt that he could go forth into the North and that he did in 1904 .

There were several men engaged in taxidermy in Grand Rapids 25 or more years ago. William Weitzel had a substantial business. Frank Storey was also a taxidermist and with him was Fred Travis. Nels Charnley, who is still in business in Grand Rapids, was also mounting heads 25 years ago."

G. H. Hause 10/15/40

P. 1. Col. 1  
Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. Aug. 30, 1933 Vol. XLIII-9

Aug 30 - 33

There are many people in this section who remember the days of the steamboats on the upper Mississippi. It was not so many years ago, possibly 25 summers past, when an occasional large boat came up from Aitkin and tied below the bridge at Grand Rapids.

Grand Rapids Herald Review  
Wed. Aug. 30, 1933 - continued

It was 40 and more years ago when the steamboat was an essential part of the transportation system up in this neck of the woods. Before the railroad came in the early nineties, all the supplies for this section, the community at Grand Rapids and the great logging industry of this immediate territory came in on the frozen trails in the winter or by steamboat in summer. Then the coming of the boat was an event. The river bank had several large warehouses and people traveled on the schedule of the river craft.

There were several boats which operated between Aitkin and Grand Rapids. One of the earlier boats was the 'Fawn.' She brought in many a cargo of goods and many a person. Another notable boat was the 'George Houghton' and the largest of them all, the pride of the fleet as it were, was the 'Andy Gibson.'

The 'George Houghton' was named after its owner, George Houghton, whose home was in Minneapolis and who spent much of his time at Aitkin and in the north. He was a most enterprising citizen. When the new town of Grand Rapids was laid out on an ambitious scale, George Houghton platted an addition which is known as Houghton's addition to Grand Rapids. This man played an important part in promotional schemes in a new country.

Two of the famous pilots of the day were John and William Lyons, brothers of Indian blood. For many years they operated on the Mississippi, both below and above Pokegama dam. In fact these two men were the only pilots who could handle the 'Andy Gibson' with safety. They knew all of the shoals, rapids, big snags and curves, of which there are a great many, between Aitkin and Grand Rapids.



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John Lyons, whose fame as a pilot extended throughout the whole section, died just a year or so ago. His descendants live in and around Ball Club and Bena.

The 'Andy Gibson' operated for many years. She was finally bought by the Potter-Casey Company and later by the Wright Mercantile Company. She went ashore somewhere near the mouth of the prairie and was damaged. One of the Lyons brothers was called to get her off and the government dam accommodated the situation with extra water. She was used some later but was either burned or sunk along about the year 1898. No big boats followed her though river navigation continued as an element of some importance for several years. "

G. H. Hause 10/16/40

Aug. 30, 1940

March 1, 1933

Indian Paydays

"Several days of last week were very welcome ones to the Chippewas \*\*\*. They were pay days and \*\*\* the Indians received some of the principal of their tribal funds.

"Since the Indians constitute a considerable proportion of the population \*\*\* we thought we would go and see how they were getting along. Last Thursday the payment was made to about 100 at Bena. The officials of the Indian Department were on hand early and so were the Indians. Some of them came in automobiles, some with horse and sleigh and quite a few just walked in, as Bena is a large center of Indian population.

"The payments now being made are from the principal of the Chippewa's funds. These are called per capita payments in contrast to the annuity payments which are made each fall. The annuity payments are the distribution of the interest on the tribal investments that amount to about \$6.00 or \$7.00 for each Chippewa at this time. (ascertain how much in 1940) The per capita payments reduce the principal of the Indian monies. These payments are voted only by Congress and, of course, if continued long enough will entirely eliminate the money which the Indians have at Washington which is now about two million dollars. (ascertain how much in 1940)

" \*\*\* Everyone who has an excuse for being an Indian is one at the time of the payments. Everyone with Chippewa blood shares equally. The toothless chieftain, 75 years of age, who is nothing but pure Chippewa, gets no more than a Chippewa who may be but a thirty-second part Indian and that fact is known to no one except the



## Indian Paydays - (continued)

March 1, 1933

Indian Department. The payments are made at several places throughout northern Minnesota but it is also interesting and strange to note that it is necessary to have a Chippewa payment at Minneapolis. In Hennepin county there are about 800 Chippewas who come and claim their money. Most of them do not bear much resemblance to the Indians on the reservation.

"Those who expect to see any excitement at the time of the Indian payments will, of course, be disappointed. There is none. We understand that sometimes after the payments have been made there are Indian dances and last Thursday the Catholic Ladies' aid at Bena was serving a dinner for 25 cents. Indian women were interesting their friends in attending the dinner just as their white sisters do in established communities.

"The method of payment is very simple. The Indians are already enrolled and checks are already made out for them. A slip is given to each Indian to sign and those who cannot write their names make a thumb print on the slip given to them. Asking the officials in charge how many could write their names, we find that two thirds of the Indians on this side of the reservation can sign their names well. Down around Leech Lake and in some other sections 90 per cent of the Indians sign their receipts for, of course, a generation is coming on which has had a definite amount of education.

"Everybody pities the Indian but there is no need of being too sorry for the Chippewas this winter. In fact they are better off than a great many white people. They live in the simplicity which marks the Indian reservation. Consequently when a dollar or two comes into the family it goes quite a ways. An Indian family with six children gets a couple of hundred dollars at the time of the per capita payments.

Indian Paydays - (continued)

March 1, 1933

That is a substantial amount of money these times. In addition, everyone has felt so sorry for the Indians during the past few years that they have been exceptionally prepared to meet the rigors of winter or poverty. The Red Cross sent in tons and tons of flour. In addition yard goods were given the Indian women and there was plenty of evidence of the use of this material last week. From the Government came a large amount of army materials which the men are wearing and which the women have made over for the children."

You will find the Indians exceedingly well clothed. You will find them, for this occasion, at least, (the pay day) cleaned up, happy and quite prosperous looking. Some of the girls will have silk stockings. All of the women and children have substantial overshoes. Every Indian \*\*\* well clothed and appearing to be well fed. They show much evidence of a desire to have better homes and to live well. Of course there are exceptions, as among all people.



Aug. 30, 1940

Feb. 15, 1933

Loggers of Itasca

1900 ✓  
"In the year 1900 there were a large number of loggers operating in this section. In that winter the Itasca Lumber company alone got out about 40 million feet and employed about 600 men and 300 horses. \*\*\* In later years this company produced about 250 million feet a season, under J. P. Sims' management.

Other large operators included Shevlin-Carpenter company, Backus-Brooks, C. A. Smith, H. C. Akeley Lumber company, Bovey-Delaittre, Burlington Lumber company, the Weyerhausers, Carpenter-Lamb company, Zimmerman & Ives, Price Brothers, Powers & Simpson, James Sherry, Bert Munson, John Frazer, O. J. Mellen, J. C. Gilmore, Patterson & Johnson, Pokegama Lumber company, J. H. Dunning, Bonness & Howe, Hurd & McAvity, Hunter and Dwyer, Doran & Dewey, Howe & Stitt, Freeman & Gray, Milligan & McGuire, Sam Simpson, S. D. Hamilton, C. D. Lewis, R. B. Polly, Mike Gether, John Hedquist, M. Lally, J. E. Taft, Lewis Baldwin, Harry Oaks, Frank Green and Mike McCarthy.

"There were doubtless many other workers in the woods at the same time but it must be remembered that Itasca county extended clear to the Canadian border. However logging operations were confined largely to this section, the Prairie, the upper Mississippi and other territory lying north of Deer river. Estimates of the amount of pine standing in Itasca county at that time totalled not less than two billion feet. The records would probably show that a very much larger amount was taken out. \*\*\* Bert Munson \*\*\* logged here until a comparatively few years ago.

Loggers of Itasca - (continued)

Feb. 15, 1933

"Al Powers was one of the outstanding characters of the early logging days. With his associates he built a railroad from Hibbing running westward to Crooked Lake in Itasca county. This was one of the first logging roads of this section. Al Powers was a man of great energy and activity. Sam Simpson was so well known in the early days of Itasca county that we think that anybody whose name is Simpson ought to have the first name of Sam. \*\*\* After finishing up some work here he went to Leech Lake and put a large steamboat upon that lake for the purpose of hauling goods, logs and passengers.

" \*\*\* Bert Munson always had a joke ready and was always up to some kind of a trick. He was a most cheerful sort of logger, willing to gamble on anything. Jim Sherry ran the hotel in Grand Rapids and also logged. He was a hardfisted logger and being somewhat hard himself, he had a rough bunch of lumberjacks. James Sherry's lumberjacks were known as Sherry's 'Tigers' and when they came to town after the season's work was over there was usually plenty of excitement. \*\*\*

"Fred Bonness \*\*\* lived at Aitkin and Minneapolis and was interested in the early days in the navigation on the real upper Mississippi. He was one of those interested in the ownership of the Andy Gibson, the large boat which made regular trips between Aitkin and Grand Rapids.

" \*\*\* The Shevlin-Carpenter interests were very capable loggers. Mike Kelly, a quiet Irishman, was their head cruiser and A. E. Lord \*\*\* was for many years manager of their logging operations. \*\*\* C. A. Smith was an extremely successful logger in Minnesota and very much interested in timber in Itasca county. He was developed by the older Pillsbury interests. Logging in Minnesota, however, was not large enough



Loggers of Itasca - (continued)

Feb. 15 & 22, 1933

for him in later years so he went to California where he failed and later died. H.

C. Akeley is an extremely well known name throughout all of northern Minnesota. \*\*\*"

1900-1  
In the winter of 1900-1 the Itasca Lumber Co. got out about 40 million feet of timber in Itasca county, employing about 600 men and 300 horses. This company, under the management of John P. Sims, had extended its logging road north from Deer River but it was not as yet logging upon the scale of later years when it would produce 250 million feet of logs in a season.

1900  
"The Price Brothers were particularly well known loggers in this section. \*\*\*  
In 1900 this firm employed about the same number of men as the Itasca company."

~~There were also in this period other important operators: Powers & Simpson, James Sherry, Bert Munson, John Frazer, O. J. Mellen, J. C. Gilmore, Patterson & Johnson, Pokegama Lumber Company, J. H. Dunning, Bonness & Howe, Hurd & McAvity, Hunter & Dwyer, Doran & Dewey, Howe & Stitt, Freeman & Gray, Milligan & McGuire, Sam Simpson, S. D. Hamilton, C. D. Lewis, R. B. Polly, Mike Gether, John Hedquist, M. Lally, J. E. Taft, Lewis Baldwin, Harry Oaks, Frank Green and Mike McCarthy.~~

★ Found to be a repetition.

August 30, 1940

Feb. 1, 1933

Finns

1931-32  
In 1931 or 1932 a large group of Finns left Itasca county bound for Russia. Those who left were communists and desired to partake in the communistic experiments across the ocean. They sold their farms and goods for whatever they could get. That was not very much. There was a large group of them who were promised special consideration in the Soviet States. \*\*\*

"It is stated that these people did not like it in Russia, but proof is hard to find. When a person is in Russia he does as the Russians say. One thing he is not to do is to express any ideas that are against the purpose and progress of the Russian experiment. In one of the Finnish communities in northern Minnesota one of those who left was to write back to his friends. If he did not like it in the new land he was to put a cross mark at the bottom of his letters. That was a mark that was to mean something to the folks back home. Letters came and they all had a cross mark. Some who had figured on leaving the United States are staying here. \*\*\* The Finns have done a splendid job of developing many sections of Itasca county.

\* Anything new developed in this regard up to 1940?



Aug. 28, 1940

Jan. 25, 1933

First Choir

1889-90  
What probably was the first choir to sing in Grand Rapids was assembled late in the year 1889 or early in 1890. It sang at the Presbyterian church, which had just been built. The choir members were Mrs. Bertha Stuckslager, then Bertha Nason, Kate Burns, Ida McCabe, and Anna McDonald. Margaret Nason played the organ.

"Grand Rapids was then a small struggling community in the back woods. The first school had been built some five or six years before. Church services had been held in the homes. Mrs. Stuckslager was baptized by the Rev. Gilfillan, but there was no active Episcopalian church in Grand Rapids at that time. According to Mrs. Stuckslager's recollections, the Presbyterian church was the only church edifice, though there were services in the various homes by the different denominations. \*\*\*

"The McCabe family was one of the first here, and Bob McCabe was one of the well known characters of the time. Chris Burns' home was near where the paper mill now stands. Mark Burns, who was a boy at that time, became a well-known authority on the administration of Indian affairs. \*\*\*. Sidney McDonald was one of the early settlers in Grand Rapids, and the two Nason girls who sang in the choir, were the daughters of Albert Nason, better known as Al.

1872  
1894  
"Albert Nason was born in Nova Scotia and came west to Minnesota about 1870. He came to the upper Mississippi country about 1872. He married Betsy Drumbeater, the daughter of Chief Drumbeater, for whom Drumbeater Island in Pokegama lake was named. The old chief was one of the prominent Chippewas of his day and died at an advanced age in 1894. His family lived at various places on Pokegama lake and the Nason children were born near Grand Rapids. Al Nason lived for a time on Pokegama Point."

First Choir - (continued)

Jan. 25, 1933

He was a man of outstanding physical strength, the older residents agreeing that he was one of the strongest and most skillful men who ever lived in the community. He still retained his reputation for strength and ability to handle himself even after the loss of his left hand by amputation after a hunting accident. After years of residence at Pokegama Point and Grand Rapids, Al Nason lived at Cohasset, and then later went to Bena where he died in 1918.

The two Nason girls, members of this first choir had some schooling at Aitkin, then in 1884 they went to the famous school at Carlisle, Penna. Here they remained for five years without a trip back to Grand Rapids or seeing their parents. They came back in 1889 and became members of the first G. R. choir.



Aug. 28, 1940

Jan. 18, 1933

Education-Schools

1914  
"Miss Edna I. Murphy came to school District Six at Deer River in 1914.

The country here was in great contrast to the Illinois prairies on which she was raised. She was immediately plunged into a new educational environment, with a half dozen different nationalities, with many new people to teach. There were the schools of the village and those which taught the Indian children. \*\*\*

1917  
"In 1917 Miss Murphy began her work in School District Number One, and no one has played a more important part in the development of the rural educational system of this great district. \*\*\*

"The first schools of this section were conducted at some homesteader's residence. The children came from the nearby section, some walking for several miles through the big woods. The teacher might have been the wife of the homesteader, who many have taught school in Iowa or somewhere in southern Minnesota. A regular teacher might be later employed and then would come the schoolhouse.

"The first schoolhouses were of logs. Itasca county had the famous little red and white schoolhouses, but the educational system went back a little further than this. A small clearing would be made, the neighbors would get together, and in a short time there would be educational facilities for the growing families.

"Before the day of good roads the small schoolhouse served each community. The districts built this kind of school. They were the only kind that could be pro-

Education-Schools - (continued)

Jan. 18, 1933

vided. A complete system of education was built under conditions in which the one-room school was a necessity.

"Most of that early system has been discarded. There are few, if any, log school houses left in Itasca county. The one-room structures are rapidly going into disuse. \*\*\* The highways and buses have come and changed the whole scheme of education. \*\*\*

"School District Number One is one of the largest districts in the state and, for that matter, in the United States. \*\*\* (I have an up to date prospectus of this great school plant in another place)



**Post Office Department**  
FIRST ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington

IN REPLYING  
REFER TO INITIALS AND DATE

AF

February 8, 1941.

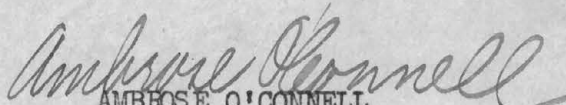
FEB 11 1941

Mr. Roscoe Macy,  
Minnesota Writers' Project,  
28 Northeast 2nd Street,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

My dear Mr. Macy:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of January 22, 1941, requesting information concerning the history of the post office of Grand Rapids, Itasca County, Minnesota. In reply thereto there is enclosed herewith a list containing the date of establishment of that office together with the names and terms of service of the postmasters appointed to serve there.

Sincerely yours,

  
AMBROSE O'CONNELL  
First Assistant Postmaster General.

JB  
Encl.

GRAND RAPIDS, ITASCA COUNTY, MINNESOTA

POSTMASTER

Lowe G. Seavey  
LaFayette Knox  
John Beckfelt  
LaFayette Knox  
Philip Caselberg  
Oliver H. Stilson  
Frederick A. McVicar  
Edward C. Kiley  
William W. Tyndall  
Ada Tyndall (Acting)  
Anthony L. LaFreniere  
Allen J. Doran (Acting)  
Allen J. Doran  
Archie Rassmussen (Acting)  
Archie Rassmussen

DATE APPOINTED

July 23, 1874 (Established)  
August 4, 1879  
August 19, 1885  
July 11, 1891  
March 24, 1894  
May 12, 1897  
January 21, 1902  
March 3, 1914  
January 15, 1923  
May 25, 1926  
May 22, 1928  
December 31, 1933  
May 12, 1934  
June 23, 1936  
February 16, 1937



Biographical Sketch on M. J. Baker.

Almost fifty years have elapsed since Grand Rapids was incorporated as a village and designated as the permanent county seat of Itasca County. While there are a few people living who were here during that period, they are for the most part defective in memory because of their age. I find considerable confusion and even contradiction in the statements of some of these "old-timers." Items and articles in their early newspapers were, to put it mildly, "guarded" in their tone. Some of these older settlers were limited in their experience. One recalls considerable about logging operations, but knows little about the village except that there were plenty of saloons and big crowds in town at the opening and closing of the camps. Several others did not settle permanently at or around Grand Rapids until that village was designated as the county seat. The knowledge of the latter on the events leading up to the establishing of the county seat are pure hearsay. Incidentally, I have found four or five versions of the town rivalry and county seat fight between LaPrairie and Grand Rapids.

I have finally found a person who was here throughout that time, a man of better than average intelligence and education, and who has been identified with Itasca County from 1889 to the present time with the exception of one year. This person is M. J. Baker of Deer River.

M. J. Baker was born in Greenville, Pennsylvania, October 11, 1863. Greenville is one of the string of iron and steel towns stretching out from Pittsburgh. In his early twenties he came to Duluth by boat. The interest of Mr. Baker and others of his section of Pennsylvania in Duluth and northern Minnesota had been aroused by the reports of iron ore discoveries. Mr. Baker got a job in Duluth as clerk in a clothing store, having had experience along this line in Pennsylvania. He worked in Duluth for two or three years, and in St. Paul for a short period. He preferred Duluth, and returned there.

He made a trip with an exploring and cruising group through northern Minnesota. The trip covered the Canadian boundary lakes, Rainy River, and part of the Little Fork River. They were gone about seven weeks. When he returned from this expedition, and began looking around for a job, he applied to the firm of Wells, Stone Co. This firm had an opening in one of their outlying branches. They hesitated about sending Mr. Baker on the job, telling him he appeared too well-dressed and would not like the location. Two others they had sent to the place had returned as quickly as they could get back. He explained he thought he would like it, and promised to stick.

The job they offered him was at the end of a railroad line that had been built out from Duluth to the site of some logging operations on the upper Mississippi River. The place had been called Neilsville, but had lately had its name changed to LaPrairie. It was located on a point of land where the Prairie River empties into the Mississippi, and was the terminal point of the railroad.

As he recalls the background, Wells, Stone, and J. P. Sims had come from Saginaw, Michigan, at which place they had conducted a store. He remembers that they told him that their only delivery wagon was a wheelbarrow. In settlement of some store bills and other deals they had acquired title to some timber claims that were located in northern Minnesota on the upper Mississippi. For the purpose of realizing on these claims and getting out the timber they established themselves in Duluth and built this railroad, terminus LaPrairie.

M. J. Baker - 2

Mr. Baker took the job in their LaPrairie branch, arriving there in the early months of 1889. He took over the management of the store, which he managed for a little over eight years until it was closed permanently. He describes these years at LaPrairie as the happiest years of his life. He was furnished with a riding horse, as well as a team and buckboard in order that he might visit various logging camps and the settlement of Grand Rapids and other points in connection with his business.

At the time he came to LaPrairie, Itasca County, comprising the present Itasca and Koochiching Counties, had been designated as a separate county but was governed from offices in Aitkin. The area had formerly been a part of Aitkin County. The local governmental agency consisted of two commissioners. These commissioners held most of their meetings at that time in LaPrairie, but there was no definitely designated court house or county building.

One of the largest holders of real estate in LaPrairie was Courtney Buell. The town was booming, and Buell was holding his prices high. The big logger of this section was J. P. Sims. There were other camps than the Sims camp, but Mr. Baker said that at least three-fourths of the lumberjacks in this region were working for J. P. Sims.

J. P. Sims wished to buy a block of land to store timber, put in tracks, and load timber in LaPrairie. Buell owned the property, and Sims felt that he was being held up. Sims finally made a deal to have a bridge built over the Prairie River, and the railroad extended to Grand Rapids. He came to the site of the small village of Grand Rapids and bought sites there for his yards. When the matter of determining the county seat came up, Sims favored Grand Rapids and voted his lumberjacks in favor of that site. Mr. Baker said that this was without question the determining factor in the county seat rivalry between LaPrairie and Grand Rapids. He said this situation was aided by the activity of some hustlers in Grand Rapids.

Mr. Baker's eyewitness recollections of LaPrairie include murders, riots, political conventions, barroom and street fights, lumberjack dances, and I was able to get him to describe a few.

He recalled that at one time a hotel and bar in LaPrairie aroused the indignation of a group of citizens and he overheard some of them planning to go down there and clean it out. He and another young fellow wished to see the "fun" without being participants. They slipped around the back way and got into the kitchen of the "hotel", where they could look out through the barroom and into the "parlor" and see everything that was going on. They put the light out in the kitchen, and considered that they had ringside seats. The indignation committee arrived and the fight started and provided splendid entertainment for a time. But, he said, suddenly there was a z-z-z-t-t-t, z-z-z-t-t-t, past his and his friends ears, being caused by a couple of random bullets. He said they got out of there fast, and did not see the end of the fight. The ruction resulted in the place being closed down for a while and opening later under different management.

He heard the shot and witnessed the arrest the time that Lewis, as he was known in LaPrairie (he went under the name of Dalton in other places), shot



M. J. Baker - 3.

McCafferty. The newspaper accounts of the time state that the village marshall who arrested him marched him down to the jail, and when they reached there Lewis or Dalton, turned his gun on the marshall and said he did not see any reason why any more people should be killed, and as he had the drop on the marshall he was permitted to get away. They said posses were organized and an intensive hunt made for the man. Mr. Baker said that the inside story of the matter differed from this. This marshall was known to be robbing the lumberjacks that he managed to arrest, and that he really never went to the jail with his prisoner at all. He said it was also known that Dalton returned to his own place and collected his funds and got himself a guide and companion and started out. He was known to have gone north, supposedly heading for International Falls. Lewis, or Dalton, was never heard of again, but his companion showed up in another place with plenty of money.

Mr. Baker recalls a political convention. This convention was held while feeling between LaPrairie and Grand Rapids was high. A Mr. Munson, prominent citizen of LaPrairie had been properly designated as chairman of this convention, but when the convention gathered A. G. Bernard who was the editor of the Grand Rapids Magnet attempted to take charge of the meeting. Mr. Baker said Munson was an enormous, powerful man, and that when Bernard tried to call the convention to order Munson rose to his feet and yelled "I'm chairman of this convention", stretched out his arma, and whirled around, sweeping everyone else off the platform; then he proceeded to open the convention.

In 1890 Grand Rapids wished to celebrate the Fourth of July, and asked La Prairie to permit them to do this without a competing celebration by La Prairie, with the understanding that the next year La Prairie would have the celebration. This was agreed to, and the celebration duly held at Grand Rapids. By July 4, 1891, Grand Rapids had been designated as temporary county seat, and Grand Rapids, led by A. G. Bernard, editor of the Magnet, promoted the idea of having a Grand Rapids celebration in 1891 with resulting indignation on the part of La Prairie.

La Prairie also made preparations for a celebration. Since La Prairie was the end of the railroad and some of the guests invited by Grand Rapids were coming by train, the Grand Rapids committee sent busses or democrat wagons over to La Prairie to haul their guests from the train to Grand Rapids. These conveyances were met by explosions from loaded anvils. One team ran away, smashing up the rig, and when the drivers got the other teams under control the La Prairie citizens proceeded to take hold of one rig and turn it over, and release the horses. The third bus turned around and left without passengers.

After the Fourth, the newspapers Grand Rapids Magnet and La Prairie News "fought it out." The editor of the News, W. A. Thomas, made some very personal remarks about the previous life of the editor of the Magnet, Bernard. Bernard sued Thomas for libel, but the only result of the newspaper fracas was a mild retraction published in the news a few months later.

Mr. Baker mentions that among the families resident in La Prairie was one by the name of Leahy. He said that they lived in La Prairie for two or three years, and that at that time they had a boy in Annapolis Naval Academy who visited La Prairie on his leave of absence. He says that as near as he can determine this boy was the recently retired Admiral Leahy of the United States Navy. Incidentally, Mr. Baker has a son connected with the Navy at present, working with the airplane procurement division.

M. J. Baker - 4.

Mr. Baker mentioned Mr. Bowman who was a banker in LaPrairie. He said that Bowman was an "aristocratic" type of person, and that it was surprising to find him in such a location. He stated that Bowman believed in trying to make money, and was a bit of the Wallingsford type.

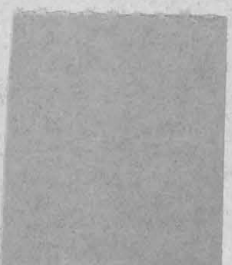
After Mr. Baker had been manager of the La Prairie store for eight and a fraction years, logging on a tributary to the Prairie River~~ly~~ was completed and the camps had moved back from town. The railroad had extended further west and had been connected up with the Great Northern. Mr. Baker said that this railroad had once had their grade built as far west as Winnibigoshish Lake, across a considerable stretch of Indian and forestry land. He states that Jim Hill used his influence in Washington and had gotten an order issued requiring them to remove all their railway camps and equipment from the Indian and forestry lands. At this time most of the town of LaPrairie had moved to Grand Rapids and Wells, Stone closed their store.

John Beckfelt in Grand Rapids had been trying to get Baker to come and work for him, but they could not agree on the wages. At the closing of the La Prairie store he managed another Wells store at Tower, Minnesota for a period of one year. He said he did not like it at Tower. There was a very large foreign element there, and all his acquaintances and friends of eight years were in the Grand Rapids neighborhood. Further, John Beckfelt raised his offer in the matter of wages, and Baker came to work for Beckfelt in 1899. 1899

- He worked for Beckfelt from 1899 to 1903. He said that Mr. Beckfelt was a character whom he admired very much, and that he left him only to go into business for himself. He said Beckfelt was public-spirited and extremely kind-hearted, but that he covered it up by being very brusque in manner. He said Beckfelt was extremely independent and he often differed from the other businessmen in various matters, but that Mr. Beckfelt in the long run invariably proved to have been right. He often extended credit to people who had been blacklisted by other concerns, sometimes when he really never expected to get paid. He said Beckfelt never wanted anything said about it after he had done anything for any one, and was liable to be downright insulting to anyone who mentioned it. Beckfelt was reputed to be a very hard man to get along with. Mr. Baker's experience with the man before, while, and after working with him convinced him that any sincere man who wished to do what was right could deal with Mr. Beckfelt.

In the La Prairie-Grand Rapids controversy Mr. Baker stated that he personally owned no property in either place and really enjoyed the incidents as a good show. He today believes that the townsite of Grand Rapids was the wiser choice.

Mr. Baker went to Deer River in 1903 and opened a store. He has been in business continuously from that time to the present. He has the largest mercantile concern in volume of business in the county of Itasca. He is a man of seventy-seven years of age, and still takes an active part in the management of his affairs. He was for years a member of the County Welfare Board, being one





M. J. Baker - 5.

of the first board in 1917. There is no ~~more~~ highly respected citizen in the county of Itasca.

I questioned Mr. Baker about the wild rice industry here. He said that he bought, or rather traded, for some wild rice for a time. He said his experience with this was very much like his experience in fur buying. He believes that those are both specialized wares, best dealt in by people specializing in them. He has discontinued handling both items, and refers those wishing to sell to people specializing in the products. He states that the probable headquarters of the wild rice trade in northern Minnesota is Ernest Fleming, located at Bena, Minnesota, but that Albert Anderson at Max, inland town in Itasca County, also buys a considerable amount of wild rice.

How long did H. D. Powers keep his weather records? Are they still kept up? Where are they to be found?

Mr. Powers started his weather records about 1900. He tells me that he acquired this hobby from his father, who had kept records for years. He kept them from 1900 until the middle of October, 1940, some two weeks ago. He has a file of these records here, and states that he will gladly answer any specific questions regarding them.



Do the Indians there still resort to the medodo (steam bath) and other Indian "cures"?

No, they do not, even in their villages such as at Inger they no longer use the medodo.

Give me details of the Chippewa Indian pay day. How many get it? How much do they get? Do they use it wisely, or go on a toot? When will these payments cease?

At present there are no Indian pay days. These old pay days were allotments coming to Indians for sale of tribal lands or timber on tribal lands, and Federal grants and such Federal funds. They received their last payment in 1935. Whey they get it, they all get it. It is an apportionment of so much per head. The last payment, as I stated, was in 1935 and amounted to \$2.40 each. You ask if they use it wisely or go on a toot. I inquired of the local welfare board that looks after these Indians in this county. They stated that they were sorry to say that it was mostly toot.



*out*  
Describe the Maryland Hotel at Grand Rapids.

There is at present no Maryland Hotel. I questioned old-timers about some early hotel that might have had that name. No one remembers such a place. Some think that possibly you mean the Gladstone hotel.

What can you tell me with regard to the Indian Mounds at Pokegama?

I have partially answered this before, but a local physician, Dr. Russell, who has been here since the early 90's, suggests that you write to Gustafson at Cass Lake Museum for more extensive information.

*out* Where did E. F. Ely preach at Pokegama? Any remains of church or mission?

I can find no record or recollection of an E. F. Ely preaching at this Pokegama Lake. Possibly it was the other one.

*out* What can you tell of the old trader, Thomas Conner, who had a post on Lake Pokegama in 1816, (before Fort Snelling was built) and said there was a French post there long before he got there?

Possibly this was the other Pokegama Lake.

*out* Is the Kanabec river the true outlet of Pokegama?

The Kanabec river is the true outlet of the Pokegama Lake in Pine county, but the Itasca county Pokegama empties through a short outlet into the Mississippi river.



How many airports in Grand Rapids? Any commercial air service? How many privately owned planes and licensed pilots there in 1940?

There are three airports in the vicinity of Grand Rapids. One is the Grand Rapids field which is just south of town. Another is the Otis field at Sugar Lake, and the third is the Coleraine field at Coleraine, seven miles away.

In Grand Rapids itself there are two privately owned planes. There is a Grand Rapids chapter of the National Aeronautical Association, the N. A. A. This chapter has fifty-six members.

There is no commercial air service to Grand Rapids.

What is the story of that haunted house up there, and is it widespread?

*out*  
I have enquired around about this question. I can find nothing about the story of any haunted house anywhere near Grand Rapids. The most wide-spread story of such a place is about one on the outskirts of the city of Hibbing. There was considerable talk some ten to twelve years ago about this place, particularly among the foreign element. The place became hard to rent, and has been torn down.

If there has been any report of a local haunted house, the report is certainly not wide-spread. Nothing is known of any such story at either newspaper office. I have also inquired about it from five different persons who have been here since 1892, and they recollect nothing of the sort since that time.

Give descriptions of any "largests", "firsts", and "onlys" in Grand Rapids and vicinity, or any place in the county if it ties in at all with the growth and development of Grand Rapids.

One of the things that might be mentioned in this connection is the fact that Itasca County, chiefly through the efforts of Grand Rapids sportsmen, has been one county in northern Minnesota where the deer hunting season is characterized by the one-buck law and prohibition on the killing of does. As this is not a state law, enforcement of this rule has fallen chiefly on the sheriff and deputy sheriffs.

This year Itasca County opened a five day deer hunting season for the bow-and-arrow hunters. During this period deer may be hunted, but only with bow and arrow.

Another distinctive Grand Rapids feature that might be mentioned here is the potato festival. I have written at length about this in another place.

Another rather distinctive local characteristic is School District #1, of which the village of Grand Rapids is a part. This has also been described in detail elsewhere.

Grand Rapids, or rather, Itasca County, was one of the first counties in the north country, and certainly the first rural county in Minnesota to have a non-political body set up as a welfare board. Since 1917 Grand Rapids or Itasca County has had such an organization. This body is made up of five members, one from each commissioners district. They have complete charge of the county hospital, and distribution of county or county allocated funds for the needy. These five members are appointed by the commissioners, each for his own district. The term of office of the welfare board members is three years, while that of the commissioners is four years. After the member of the welfare board is appointed, he must be O. K.'ed by the local district court judge, and cannot be removed except for cause, and cannot be eliminated until the end of his term of office merely by changing the commissioner in a given district.



Supplemental Questionnaire on Grand Rapids  
E. A. Sumner  
August 30, 1940

Largest, firsts, etc. (continued)

This group is given the sole, complete, and unquestioned control of all hospital management, and handling of funds for the needy. There have been several disagreements between this group and the Board of County Commissioners over matters of authority in these fields, but the Welfare Board has always been upheld by the court.

The existence of this body has been of distinct help to Itasca County the past eight or ten years. Their executive secretary for the past ten years has been A. K. Seckinger. They now have control of all matters pertaining to the county home, county hospital, distribution of relief, certification for Federal Work Programs, distribution of surplus commodities, child welfare, aid to feeble-minded, deaf, dumb, etc.

## Supplementary Research on Grand Rapids

An interesting item of early Grand Rapids history appears in the Grand Rapids Magnet of July 16, 1891. In this issue was printed a copy of Ordinance No. 1 of the village of Grand Rapids. Among other items in this ordinance is the provision that anyone appearing "in the dress of the opposite sex will be punished with a fine of not more than one hundred dollars. Mike McAlpine was president of this first village council, and T. R. Provitz was first temporary recorder.

Some other early newspaper items indicate some conditions at that time. In the issue of June 14, 1892, the Magnet states editorially "There are odors permeating the air of some parts of the town that are strong enough and bad enough to gag a dog. If the Village Council has the power, it should appoint a Board of Health, to clean up all pestilence breeding places.

July 5, 1892, the Magnet reports that at a Grand Rapids gathering J. Adam Bede introduced as a speaker Allen W. Thurman of Columbus, Ohio. There was considerable interest in this section on the part of a group of Ohio people in the early '90's. They were interested in the iron deposits of this section.

The first County Fair or record was held on October 6, 1892.

In 1901 the city block between where now are the Pokegama and Riverside Hotels, had on the east side of the street eleven saloons in the one single block. These saloons received their main harvest in the fall opening and spring closing of the lumber camps, when the lumberjacks came into town by the hundreds. During these rush periods it was very common to see two or three fights going on in a saloon at the same time. These contests were knock-down and drag-out affairs, nothing barred. Some were grudge fights, some to prove who was the better man, some the result of a combination of the joy of living and too much liquor.

In some homes of the settlement there had been occasional church services, held by travelling preachers and missionary priests. The first church was built in 1891, and was the Presbyterian, probably due to the predominance of Scotch in the community. This was followed in 1892 by the building of the Catholic church. As more mothers of families made their homes here there was an urge toward "respectability" and the "better things of life."

The April 11, 1893 Magnet reports that quite a number of "tin horn" gamblers who flocked here expecting to get a good stake out of the lumbermen have left for greener pastures. When gambling was prohibited in town their occupation was gone.

April 18, 1893 the Magnet reports that a "Shadow Social" was put on by the Presbyterian Ladies Aid. During this year the paper makes several mentions of Wade Blakers menagerie.

On May 9, 1893, it seems that some improvement was made in the aforementioned sanitary conditions: "Street commissioner Douglas with a crew of men is cleaning up the streets. Citizens should take enough pride in the appearance of the town, not to sweep rubbish and refuse out of doors hereafter".



## Supplementary Research on Grand Rapids.

In the flush of the victory of establishment of the permanent county seat at Grand Rapids the 1893 Grand Rapids paper was referring to LaPrairie as "our eastern adjunct by the water tank."

The May 30, 1893 Magnet mentions L. F. Knox, once a resident of Kilbourn City, as being credited with having conducted the first store in Grand Rapids, and that he carried the mail from Aitkin on his back and was the first postmaster. There is a bit of confusion here as Wakefield is supposed to have been the first postmaster in Grand Rapids. As near as I can get at the facts, the Warren Potter Company built a river situation or stopping place just below what is now Grand Rapids in 1872, and had a second building in 1874 for a store building and brought in a stock of goods. L. F. Knox worked for this concern as manager of the store. Some say he may have handled some mail addressed to Aitkin and intended for people in this section, but that there was no definite post office here until Wakefield was made postmaster.

The first newspaper published in Grand Rapids was the Grand Rapids Magnet, whose first issue was published on June 11, 1891. A. G. Bernard was the editor of this paper. He had come to northern Minnesota to establish a paper at LaPrairie, but was induced to switch to Grand Rapids and help boost the County Seat prospects of this village.

The most definite and reliable information I can get on very early days is found in the June 25, 1891 issue of the Magnet. In this issue an effort was made to make a chronicle of the early days of the town and the settlement of the region. Some of this I quote: "W. Potter and Co. was established in 1872 and at this time Grand Rapids was a logging and Indian trading point. All there was of the settlement was on the south bank of the river. Mr. Joseph Gould was associated with Mr. Potter as resident partner and manager. He was succeeded in turn as manager by Mr. Knox, Mr. Casey, and Mr. Birch."

"In 1889 Mr. George F. Meyers assumed control of the firm. Their main store in 1891 was 28x40 feet, with an addition of the same size. There was a warehouse and a barn on the river bank, each 32x76 feet. There was also a hotel 24x32 feet, two stories high."

"L. F. Knox came from Aitkin as Potter & Co. manager in 1877. In 1878 he started in business for himself in a log building 18x24 feet in size. This was located just west of the Potter establishment on the south river bank. In 1879 he replaced the log building with a frame building 22x28 feet, two stories high. This was located further west on the river, and it seems, on the north bank."

"In 1884 he sold out to Wakefield and Company and returned to Wisconsin, where he stayed for three years. He returned here in 1887 and erected a building 22x54 feet, and an addition of 12x54 feet as a warehouse. He was the first County Commissioner and first chairman of the Board of County Commissioners."

## Supplementary Research on Grand Rapids

"In 1891 the log building that had served as a school house was replaced by a new building 40x50 feet, two stories high. This building was located where the present Central School stands. This two story building was the one that was later moved to Cohasset."

"The first church built, the Presbyterian, was a building 40x42 feet."

The first election in Grand Rapids was held June 23, 1891. The village officers elected were: Michael McAlpine, President of the Village Council; Village Trustees, James Sherry, A. T. Nason, R. J. Breckenridge; Temporary Recorder, T. R. Provitz; Treasurer, W. H. Powers (the treasurer was to receive two percent on receipts as payment for his services); Justices of the Peace, George Meyers, Charles Kearney; Constables, William Smith, John McDonald; Marshal, C. D. Lyon (who was to receive fifty dollars per month); Village Attorney, C. L. Pratt; Street Commissioner, W. V. Fuller.

At the first meeting of this newly elected village council, D. W. Doran applied for a license to sell liquor.



Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause  
Nov. 20, 1940

"Grand Rapids Weekly Eagle:"

First issue on July 3, 1890 - continued until July 1, 1891 or possibly earlier.

The first publisher was the Eagle Publishing Co. Who published the paper from its first issue through Dec. 20, 1890 and following.

Published by M. Stone from Sept. 20, 1890 to July 1, 1891 or possibly earlier.

The newspaper room has only one issue, that of July 3, 1890, that is to say Vol. 1 - No. 1.

Grand Rapids Herald Review  
P. 1. Col. 1- Vol. XLIX - 41  
Wed. April 17, 1940.

APR 17-40

"Looking at a box of rayon shirts and shorts the other day reminded Henry Ranfranz of the early years in Grand Rapids. He could not help but recall the days of woolen shirts and drawers, some of them red and others made from blankets.

Mr. Ranfranz is, in very truth, a pioneer merchant. Very few have *been* in the county longer. He came in 1898 from Rochester, where things were very much different than up in this neck of the Woods. His brother was operating a restaurant on whiskey row. Henry Ranfranz helped him.

In those days saloons never closed. Those who drank also needed food. Restaurants were open all of the time. Those were the days when lumberjacks came in by the hundreds, turned their checks over to the bartenders and left town, broke, for the drive. Among the characters of the day was Dave Chambers, better known as 'Nigger Dave.' He was a famous cook and had many important customers. In addition he was quite a church man. On Sunday he would dress up in a long tailed coat, high hat, patent leather shoes and proceed with a gold headed cane to

Grand Rapids Notes  
Nov. 20, 1940

the Presbyterian church where he worshipped. He was also a good contributor to the church. He was in Grand Rapids ten years or more and died here.

After a year or so in the restaurant Henry Ranfranz went to work for John Metzger, the butcher. He delivered meat about town. Then he was employed by the Kremer Brothers, Arthur and Al, who had a store where Robinson's Jewelry is now found. John Beckfelt, the pioneer merchant of the community, used to walk by this store every morning and because the windows appeared well he hired Henry Ranfranz to go to work in his store. There about ten years was spent.

The Beckfelt store employed a dozen or more clerks and business was good. The mercantile business of those days was with the Indians, the loggers and the lumberjacks. Patronage from the village itself was small compared to the volume with the outsiders.

There was a large business in game before the days of game laws. The Indians used to tire of venison and would trade deer carcasses for pork and oleomargarine. The market for venison used to be about five cents a pound and the Beckfelt warehouse would have 25 or more frozen deer in the late fall and early winter. The Indians also brought in ducks by the sackful. The traveling men from the cities used to bargain for the game and it would be shipped, sometimes a carload at a time, to St. Paul.

Another product for which there was demand was tobacco. John Beckfelt would buy a solid carload of tobacco in those early days. Great quantities were chewed in the lumber camps and there was demand for Spearhead and Climax. Peerless was the favorite brand for smoking. In addition snuff was sold in vast amounts. It was generally carried in earthly jars which would hold a pound. Strange as it may seem there was also a large demand for candy of the cheaper kinds and large amounts

When men were  
mowed by beauty and  
artistic display.

Car  
of



Grand Rapids, Dec. 16, 1940

E. A. Sumner  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

DEC 26 REC'D

Dear Sir:

I have your letter regarding the Hodge notes on Grand Rapids. These notes surely are screwy. The following is about the correct dope on medical practice here.

The first doctor to come into Itasca and to be sent to Grand Rapids to practice his profession was a Dr. Walker. He was a government doctor sent in here to care for the men who were constructing the headwater dams at Pokegama, Winnibigoshish, Leach, Federal Dam, etc. He came in about 1861. He was here during the smallpox epidemic of 1882-83, and other physicians were sent here by the state and federal governments to help him at that time.

The Dr. Manson you mention came to La Prairie in 1884 or 1885 and built a hospital at La Prairie. This was a two-story frame structure. He later came to Grand Rapids and established his hospital there. This was in 1889 or 1890.

Dr. Manson's hospital was not a privately owned concern, but a company affair. This company operated here under several different names. When they encountered legal or financial difficulties they closed up and re-opened under a different name. The headquarters of this variously named company seem to have been Chicago. They had their head hospital at Duluth, and others scattered throughout the timber country; at Grand Rapids, Brainerd, Crookston, among other places. They were a commercial outfit, in this day and age some folks would call it a racket. They operated by selling "hospital tickets". These tickets were sold to the lumberjacks in the camps at prices ranging from nine dollars up. They were sold on commission. The ticket was supposed to entitle the owner to any hospital care he should happen to need during the period of one year. Where the lumberjack did not have the cash, which was the usual case, an order on the camp boss was accepted. The decision of whether or not you were in need of hospital care was made by the hospital doctors, and after your ticket was paid for you could easily recover quite well in the camp or be entirely too sick to be moved. This last observation is founded on what was told me by fellows who were working in the woods here at that time. They finally got into enough of a jam so that they closed permanently, and Dr. Russell and Dr. Ehle took over the hospital after it had been closed for a while. They could not make it a paying proposition, and closed it after a couple of years.

It remained closed for two years, then was re-opened with Dr. Ehle & Dr. Russell handling the medical end and the Benedictine Sisters the nursing. During this period the Benedictine Sisters travelled through the camps selling hospital tickets at twelve dollars each. They also sold some tickets to the townspeople, which the previous outfit had been unable to do. However, they found they could not give conscientious service on this basis, and were closed for short periods of time up to 1912. The place was run intermittently as a sort of nursing home by the Sisters and private individuals until 1917, when it was closed permanently. The building is now used as a residence.

After the 1882-1883 smallpox epidemic, there had been sporadic outbursts of smallpox in different places, and this finally showed up in the mining towns. Also there was a large amount of tuberculosis in the county. Mining town episodes resulted in pressure being put on the county commissioners to provide a pest-house.

Tuberculosis cases were being cared for in various sanatoria in this and other states, mostly as county charges. Commissioners sometimes made cash appropriations to permit victims of the disease to leave for other climates, such as Colorado or California. These states began to return some of the improvidents. This county expense led to agitation for a tuberculosis sanitorium

On June 10, 1913 the county board of commissioners set aside a sum of \$15,000 and provided for a small levy for additional funds; this all with the condition or understanding that the State of Minnesota would furnish a like amount for purchase of a site and erection of a building, and thereafter would assume one-half the cost of maintenance. The county board at the same meeting appointed Drs. Russell, Dr. Storch of Grand Rapids, and Dr. Ring of Nashwauk as a committee to decide on the advisability of and location of a sanitorium.

After careful investigation and consideration this committee advised against the project for Itasca County. Basis of the decision was the matter of a site. From the standpoint of practical facilities, there was no possible site except those that were in or on the outskirts of a village of the county located on the mainline railroad. The committee considered the location of a tuberculosis sanitorium in any such place as too great a menace to the health of the community under consideration. There were other minor factors, but this was the chief reason. As a result of the committee report, the matter was dropped for a time; meanwhile, the fund appropriated accumulated a bit of interest. By 1915 the question was revived with the urging of a county hospital. The Herald-Review for August 25, 1915, in a leading front-page article states "There is an appropriation of \$20,000.00 ear-marked two years ago (1913) for a hospital and this fund is lying idle. A law passed by the legislature in 1915 made it possible for the county commissioners to appropriate \$40,000.00 to build and maintain a hospital and, if that is not enough, that \$20,000.00 can be added to the appropriation legally." A suggestion is made in the article that the hospital be built and turned over to a Catholic sister-hood to run. The article also states that a county-wide vote in 1916 would be necessary to sanction the building of such an institution under county expense and sponsorship.

With this, interest revived, and the Herald-Review for October 6, 1915 reports that the Grand Rapids commercial club had appointed on October 4, a committee to meet with the County Board of Commissioners to discuss the hospital matter. The members of this committee were Henry Hughes, Ralph Stone, A. L. Thwing and J. A. Amberg.

The July 12, 1916 issue of the Herald-Review states that the Board of County Commissioners had decided to put the question of a county hospital up to the voters of the county in the November 1916 election. It states "there has been considerable agitation for such a hospital from time to time and much discussion pro and con on the idea of a county hospital." "The County Board of Commissioners determined to have the voters decide the question and ask for a vote in November on the question of building the county hospital at a cost not to exceed \$50,000.00."

The voters' decision in November was in favor of the hospital and on November 14, 1916 the members of the Grand Rapids Commercial Club "hospital committee" named before, and President Rossman of the Commercial Club met with the County Board at the courthouse. The Commercial Club group suggested that the County Board of Commissioners appoint an advisory committee of five members. This committee would, in an unofficial capacity, aid the County Board in hospital affairs. As the proposed institution was to be county owned and conducted, it was suggested that the committee be made up of one appointment from each commissioner district, to serve without pay. The committee would, by visit and correspondence, collect



from other hospital organizations information on building and equipment, methods of management, and such other data as might be of value in building and setting up the organization of an Itasca County Hospital.

After adjournment for consideration of the proposal, the County Board met again on November 18, 1916. Having decided to follow the suggestion made, they appointed the following men to act on this advisory hospital committee:

District 1 - - - - M. J. Baker, Deer River merchant.  
District 2 - - - - George O'Brien, Cohasset farmer.  
District 3 - - - - Alexander King, Coleraine mine official.  
District 4 - - - - Dr. Daniel Costello, Grand Rapids dentist  
District 5 - - - - B. W. Batchelder, Nashwauk

At the meeting of the County Board on December 5, 1916, Dr. Bracken, secretary of the State Board of Health, discussed hospital matters with the board and advisory committee.

At the first commissioners meeting of the new year on January 2, 1917, three members of the hospital advisory committee, King, Baker, and Batchelder tendered the committee's first report. The report stated, in part: "Itasca County Hospital will be the first hospital to be constructed by a county government in the State of Minnesota. Its construction and maintenance have created new legal problems as no provision has been made in the Minnesota statutes for this kind of county work."

The Herald-Review of February 14, 1917, states "County Attorney Ralph Stone, assisted by C. C. McCarthey, and receiving suggestions from a number of others has drafted a bill which is proposed to have introduced at the present session of the legislature, providing for the management and control of the new Itasca County Hospital, and for the poor of the county." This act was passed by the legislature on April 10, 1917. It is Chapter 187 - S. F. No. 635, laws of 1917. This was amended in 1931.

It had been a matter of common consent throughout the county that the new county hospital should be at the county seat, Grand Rapids. The Commercial Club of the village had been much interested in promoting the project, as a social benefit to the county at large and to the village as a business asset. There was considerable maneuvering in determining the site. Far-sighted store-keepers thought it would be nice to have the location convenient to their stores. The county and hospital board viewed and priced possible sites, but found prices high. Options had been taken. One very desirable site was at the time being used as a baseball field. Expenditures for the site and building had been restricted to the \$50,000.00 authorized in the November last election. A member of the county board, Charles King, (father of the present state auditor), had an inspiration. Lying just outside Grand Rapids was the county fair grounds, owned by the county. At one end of these grounds was a small lake and a grove of pines. Here was a location without cash outlay. The beneficial effects of the quiet, pine-laden air were stressed. By a very little work and expense in landscaping, beautiful grounds could be developed. This from the county view-point. From the village angle the quiet mentioned meant distance from the downtown section. Furthermore, the expense of extensions of water-mains, sewers, and side-walks would be required.

All this produced action of citizens committees, working through the village council and the Commercial Club. From the Herald-Review we learn that "On Sunday, February 4, 1917 a group of citizens called a meeting in the commercial club rooms to iron out differences of opinion and to be in a position to offer a concrete proposition to the county board at their meeting to be held February 6."

The result of this meeting was that Grand Rapids business men decided to offer the county board choice of three different sites, namely, Block 52, Block 53 (ball park site, ), and Block 57. It was hoped to be able to purchase this with funds raised by village taxation, but the group decided to guarantee purchase by subscription if taxation method was not feasible.

At a meeting of the county board on January 11, 1917, members of the village council appeared before the board to present the desire of citizens of Grand Rapids in regard to the site. They reported that at a meeting of the village council held in December a group of citizens presented a petition favoring the purchase of a site for the hospital, this site to be donated by the village to the county as a mark of appreciation, provided this idea should meet the approval of the village and be acceptable to the county board of commissioners. This petition was accepted and placed on file by the village council. At a council meeting in January another group of Grand Rapids citizens appeared with a counter petition protesting against the purchase of a site by the village under the plan outlined in the previous petition.

Because of this lack of unanimity on the part of Grand Rapids citizenry, all matters relating to the hospital were postponed to be taken up at the next meeting of the county board to be held February 6, 1917. Notice was given to the members of the Advisory Hospital Board that they were requested to meet with the county board on that date.

At the February 6 meeting of county board and hospital board, the proposition of the group of Grand Rapids business men was presented by Henry Hughes, and the joint board adjourned to inspect the sites. "After careful examination and comparison they decided to accept the offer of ball-park site."

The building was completed and opened as a hospital in April, 1918. Improvements and additions have been added during the course of years, the largest addition being in 1926. The present value of the plant is 118,000 dollars.

Operating expenses are met by hospital receipts plus a tax levy on the whole county.

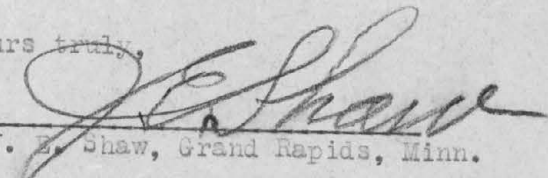
The Dr. Rosser that you mention had a private hospital located in a residence on the south bank of the river. His practice was never very large, and he closed up and left here in about 1913 or 1914. Dr. H. B. Ehle had located in La Prairie and moved to Grand Rapids in 1893. Dr. Russell came here in 1893.

My source for that part of this dope covering the earliest days I have gotten mostly from Dr. Thomas Russell, who is still living here. The latter part comes from the records of the Poor and Hospital Commission.

Thanks for your comment of approval. One of the difficulties of getting historical data on Grand Rapids is that the history of Grand Rapids is to so great an extent a history of Itasca County. By and large, I would say that the Itasca County Hospital had been a great boon to the medical profession in Grand Rapids. The bickering and fenangling of the Grand Rapids doctors at the Itasca County Hospital from 1917 to 1935 is not a picture of beauty and nobility, but of course it should not be put into a history. Things have been better the past few years.

I am glad to help whenever I can get you additional information.

Yours truly,

  
J. E. Shaw, Grand Rapids, Minn.



In connection with the matter of doctors at Grand Rapids, I might mention an interesting item.

A Dr. Roberts came to the neighborhood of what is now Grand Rapids in 1874. It seems that he stayed at the Potter and Company establishment. How long he was ~~around~~ cannot be determined but it could not have been more than a few months at most. During the winter of 1874-1875 he died. He was placed in the warehouse until arrangements could be made for his burial. Later it was decided that he should be buried and a grave was dug under a large Norway pine on a little knoll back of the Potter place. There was no minister available nor could a bible be located but LaFayette Knox ( L.F. KNOX ) went home to his store and got a prayer book (exact creed or denomination not known) and the body was buried under the tree. This is supposed to have been the first white funeral at Grand Rapids.

Although the man may have administered to a few lumberjacks it seems that he had not located here for the purpose of practicing his profession. The fact that he was buried here would indicate that he was a d rifter. It seems significant that no one claimed the body or came to the funeral.

LaFayette or L.F. Knox also was occasionally mentioned as Fay Knox.

In the newspaper filed it seems that there was a paper called the Weekly Eagle published for a few weeks here in 1890. It was printed elsewhere, some say at St. Paul, came out weekly, first issue July 3, 1890. Evidently folded up when they were able to persuade Bernard to move his "Magnet" and plant from LaPrairie to Grand Rapids.

In one issue of this paper is a statement that would seem to confuse the record. This statement is that the first building at Grand Rapids was the L.G. Seavey stopping place, built in 1874. This is understandable as the Potter buildings were downstream between a fourth and half mile from the cluster of buildings that was the first G.R. and in that day there was plenty timber and brush between the two sites.

## Supplementary Research on Grand Rapids.

You asked about the history of the Boy Scout movement here. Anything I can get is full of confusion. The first Scouts organized in the 'teen years. It seems that they started and faded, and started again, etc., under various sponsorships. Some leaders were teachers, and they were gone during the summer, and left for other jobs. Some were ministers, who did not appeal to all denominations. At present they have a sponsorship handled pretty much by the veteran organizations. Everybody refers me to Eddie Chopp. This citizen wanders all over the United States and adjoining countries. However, I can say the Scouts are a going concern, and are generally respected throughout the town now.

There are no Indians in the Scout troop here, and so far as I can learn there never has been. There are some troops in northern Minnesota that have Indian boys as members, one at Red Lake has been particularly successful with Indian boys. Actually, there are very few Indians of any kind near Grand Rapids. There are two or three quarter-breeds or less. The nearest group of Indians is at the village of Inger, and that is thirty miles from Grand Rapids. Incidentally, it is doubtful if ten percent of the Indians in Itasca county are pure bloods.



Sept. 5, 1940

Health and Pleasure Resorts

The lakes, springs, streams and cataracts which abound throughout Itasca County attract thousands of tourists, hunters and fishermen from almost every state in the Union, as well as those who best know the sport to be had in these beautiful wilds, the Minnesotans themselves. Hundreds of vacationists come from distant cities. The advantages of this climate to people afflicted with lung troubles or malarial affections cannot be overestimated. (Is this so?) Persons afflicted thus often become permanent residents of Northern Minnesota, finding the mythical severities of its winter climate equally bracing and salubrious. (Is this true?)

A very popular resort (how famous among outsiders? Estimate of yearly vacationists there?) is Lake Pokegama, only three miles from G. R. (estimate cottages, pleasure launches, name steamers if any, and those of the past, freight and passenger) Give size of lake in acres, and distances as to length & breadth. Give depth and how it is fed, and describe general shape. Tell any interesting yarn or anecdote in connection with the lake's vicinity, and tell who first had cabin or home on its shore. (white man)

The lake is a number of miles in extent and is connected with other bodies of water permitting a cruise of several days amidst ever-changing scenery. (What other bodies of water make up this cruise?)

Sept. 5, 1940

Historical and Reminiscent

The early annals of G. R. are replete with the reminiscences of the pioneers who experienced many of the privations and adventures common to frontier life in the west. The strategic advantages of the location were noted by explorers, hunters, and trappers who occasionally passed the place for two or three hundred years before it became the permanent abode of any white man.

1871<sup>c</sup>  
Warren Potter, an enterprising merchant of Aitkin, Minnesota, (Is he still alive and in Aitkin?) put up the first permanent building in 1871 (check). Three years later he opened a trading post or store which he conducted for more than twenty years. His original stock of goods was brought up from Aitkin either by steamboat or keelboats poled up against the Mississippi's current by his employees. His customers for many years were mostly Indians and woodsmen engaged in logging or cruising through the adjacent forests. Mr. Potter became one of the most influential citizens of the place and was active in promoting many needed improvements. He was a leading spirit the organization of Itasca County (when?) and the establishment of the county seat at G. R. (~~Here insert rivalry yarn -- G. R. vs La Prairie, and the lumberjack's vote for county seat~~) He was also active in securing legislation (~~locate and cite the act~~) which permitted the fees from liquor licenses to be turned into the road and bridge fund. By this means funds were raised to build the first bridge over the Mississippi river at G. R. and a road across the ravine, leading to the courthouse. The first bridge across the Prairie river was also built by means of this fund. A year or two (check just when) after the opening of Mr. Potter's store, a hotel was built by L. G. G.

1871<sup>v</sup>  
\* Tramping through and inspecting forest land for the purpose of estimating the quantity of timber.



Historical and Reminiscent - (continued)

Sept. 5, 1940

*Lowe*

(~~Lorin~~ or "Lo") Seavey, which became a prominent landmark for many years. ~~(describe the type of these two buildings)~~ Other stores and hotels were erected within the next few years and the place soon became the headquarters of numerous logging enterprises, that industry absorbing most of the attention of the inhabitants for many years.

*1887*  
*1889*  
The first school in the place was taught by Miss Martha Maddy, in the fall of 1887, but the first school house was not completed until two years later, (where did she teach?) the building having been subsequently removed to Cohasset. (When? & why?) It is recorded that only two white children attended the first school, the balance of the scholars (how many?) being either wholly or partly of Indian blood, a circumstance which caused many of the pioneers to regard a school as a superfluous innovation.

*1890*  
The first religious services in G. R. were held by the Episcopalians but occasional services were soon after commenced by Father ~~Buh~~, (Buh?) the famous Catholic missionary in Northern Minnesota. The first building erected expressly for the purpose of worship was put up by the Presbyterians in 1890. (Ascertain who the Episcopal and Presbyterian ministers were.)

(From Warren Upham's Minnesota Geographic Names, Vol. 17, of M.H.S.C.)

Buh township in Morrison county, was named in honor of Joseph Francis Buh, a Catholic priest, who was born in Austria, March 17, 1833; came to the United States in 1864; was a missionary in Minnesota during eighteen years, until 1882; and later through more than twenty years was a pastor at various places in this state. (p351)

*\* appear elsewhere that there were 3 white & 3 red children this year — 3 white & 5 red or half-breed next year 1888 or 89*

Sept. 5, 1940

Municipal Progress

<sup>1892</sup>  
<sup>1890</sup>  
With the opening of railroad communication between G. R. and Duluth which occurred in 1892, the settlement began to take on the appearance of a modern village, but its commercial supremacy was disputed for a time by the village <sup>of</sup> La Prairie which had been incorporated in 1890. This place was laid out two miles east of G. R. at the juncture of the Prairie and the Mississippi rivers. This was considered a very promising location by the promoters of La Prairie. A Village government was maintained for several years and a population of 300 or more was claimed for the town at one time while La Prairie was the temporary terminus of the Duluth and Winnipeg railroad, but the inevitable county seat fight was won by G. R. (show how) which soon after absorbed most of the population of its former rival and La Prairie became only a memory. (is this literally true?)

<sup>1892</sup>  
The village of G. R. was incorporated in 1892 and, a few months later, the county seat was established there. A substantial court house of brick and stone, and a substantial brick jail is located in the court house grounds.

<sup>1893</sup>  
<sup>1901</sup>  
The development of the village has been steady and permanent and guided by intelligence and civic wisdom. The present population (1940 U. S. census) is 4,884 ~~thousand~~ people who are uniformly busy and contented. (Give relief figures if possible) Municipal improvements have been carried out as the progress of events seemed to warrant. A municipal water system was established in 1893 and there are now \_\_\_\_\_ miles of mains and \_\_\_\_\_ miles of sewers in G. R. An electric light plant was installed in the village in 1901 and now has \_\_\_\_\_ consumers. A modern system of street lighting is



Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 5, 1940

Grand Rapids, judicial seat of Itasca Co., prosperous and progressive town of (?) inhabitants. Largest (?) Most important (?) town on G. N. R. R. between Cloquet and Bemidji, a distance of 140 miles. Has for 2/3 century been chief business center of a territory one half as great in area as the Republic of Switzerland.

At the foot of a succession of cataracts extending several miles in the Miss. river, which caused it to become the head of steamboat navigation. The lumbermen who became interested in the great track of pine, timber growing contiguous to the Miss. river and its tributaries above this point found this the most convenient location to establish headquarters for their extensive logging operations. Although the manufacture of lumber was never undertaken here on a large scale, Grand Rapids was for many years the principal logging center of northern Minnesota whence supplies of timber were floated to the mills at Minneapolis and intermediate points. A number of the most prominent lumbering concerns in the state made it the center of their logging operations for many years, employing altogether thousands of woodsmen and teamsters and establishing camps at various points within a radius of 100 miles or more, the supplies for which were "toted" from the main headquarters at Grand Rapids.

Among these lumbering firms may be mentioned T. B. Walker, Price Bros., Itasca Lumber Company, Backus-Brooks Company, Bovey-De Laittre Lumber Company, Shevlin-Carpenter Company, H. C. Akeley Lumber Company, Powers-Simpson & Co., the Washburn and Pillsbury interests, besides many other large organizations and minor contracting concerns.

Sept. 5, 1940

A Prolific Region

The natural resources of the country tributary to Grand Rapids are practically unlimited. Although for the most part the great stretches of forest have disappeared, the timber having been felled and floated away, yet the development of the country's wealth has but just begun. The western end of the Mesaba range is rich in mineral deposits.

Grand Rapids was one of the first points on the Mesaba range to attract the attention of prospectors. Expeditions fitted out here located and partially developed the Holman, Diamond and Arcturus mines a few miles east of Grand Rapids before any other developments of any importance had taken place on the range. At that time, however, it was not believed to be practicable to concentrate the ores by washing away the sand with which they were impregnated and this circumstance, together with the lack of transportation to and from these mines, delayed their development for some years. JLE



Sept. 5, 1940

Splendid Transportation Facilities

<sup>2</sup>  
1892  
Transportation by water, which was originally the sole dependence of Grand Rapids, was supplemented in 1892 by the building of the Duluth & Winnipeg railroad (now a part of the Great Northern system?) which supplies an outlet eastward to Duluth and the Twin Cities and westward directly to the Pacific coast and intermediate points.

<sup>2</sup>  
1909  
No more thrifty farms are to be found in all Minnesota than lie within a few miles of G. R. Here is located the North-East Experiment Farm, established in \_\_\_\_\_? by the state. It comprises <sup>455</sup>~~several hundred~~ acres (how big is it?) modernly equipped in all respects, in charge of (who, at present, and name all in order of succession \_\_\_\_\_ it was Superintendent McGuire in 1909). Here careful and scientific experiments are conducted in all branches of farming, horticulture, stockraising and dairying, demonstrating that every branch of husbandry known to this latitude can be carried on here successfully. The Experiment Farm has been prolific of useful results.

P. 18

The Northwest  
Illustrated Monthly Magazine  
St. Paul Feb. 1893 - Vol. XI-2

Grand Rapids History  
Mr. Sumner  
Oct. 17th, 1940.

1890

"A new town is growing up in Northern Minnesota that promises to be the trade center of that extensive district of the State, and has large possibilities of future development. Two years ago there were only fifty people at Grand Rapids, the county-seat of the great wilderness county of Itasca; now there are over a thousand. We give a picture of the place as it looked in 1890. To picture it now would be misleading, for building is going on so steadily that in two or three months the view would be wholly out of date. Grand Rapids occupies the best natural site for a central commercial and manufacturing town in all the Northern Minnesota country. In the first place it has river navigation on the Mississippi in both directions. It is situated at the break in navigation formed by the rapids of the river. Steamboats run down to Aitkin, on the Northern Pacific Railroad, and can go further down as far as the dam at Brainerd. Other boats run from the big Pokegama dam, just above the town, a long distance up the river and through the lakes which feed it, the present route ending at the head of Ball Club Lake. The rapids mark the point long ago selected by pioneer woodsmen as the most advantageous place for town building in the whole region.

When the Duluth & Winnipeg Railroad opened the northern wilds of the State and reached the Rapids, the remote and little known trading post, visited only by lumbermen and Indians, took an immediate start and attracted a number of enterprising men who saw its advantages. These men knew something of the resources of the immense undeveloped forest



The Northwest Illustrated Monthly Magazine  
St. Paul Feb. 1893 - continued

country in the midst of which Grand Rapids is located. They perceived that there was an immediate basis for the support of a considerable town in the business of supplying the lumbering camps for a radius of fifty or sixty miles. Just above the rapids where the stream is narrow and is buttressed by firm banks of rock they perceived an excellent site for a waterpower dam, that could be constructed at small cost and would have a big natural storage reservoir already for use. There they saw the future possibilities of milling and manufacturing. In the iron discoveries on the Mesaba Range they saw another resource. These discoveries are all the time being pushed westward until now the nearest known deposits of ore are only a few miles from the town. The geological formation of the range crosses the Mississippi at the rapids and goes on to the southwest until it merges into prairie country.

No one can now set any absolute limit to the ore bodies. They may yet be found in and around the town itself. In any case it is certain that there are deposits near enough to exercise considerable influence on the future of the place. As a center for shipment and for the supply of farming settlements alone Grand Rapids can look forward to a prosperous future. With all these resources in hand or close at hand it is no wonder that men of business sagacity took hold of the new town two years ago and that the place has grown with rapidity and solidity.

The Duluth and Winnipeg built on beyond Grand Rapids in 1891 about twenty miles and halted to await the results of efforts to strengthen its finance. Money has recently been raised to continue

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St. Paul Feb. 1893 - continued

construction to the Red River Valley and the road will probably be completed this year to Crookston and Grand Forks. This will greatly stimulate the further development of the Northern Minnesota country, because it will open a market westward for lumber on the prairies of Minnesota and North Dakota. It will make Grand Rapids an excellent point for the sawing and general manufacturing of lumber and stimulate the establishment of mills at various points along the line of the railroad which will furnish trade to the central town of the region. It will also in time bring Grand Rapids into notice as a favorable point for flour-milling by waterpower, the town being on the shortest line of rail transportation from the wheat fields of the lower valley of the Red River to the shipping ports at the head of Lake Superior. The waterpower and transportation facilities will attract a paper manufacturing industry before long, for which there is an immense supply of wood-pulp material in the forests close at hand.

Railway enterprise has just entered the new field of Northern Minnesota. Here is a region half as large as the State of Pennsylvania yet to be settled and developed. True, it is nearly all forest-covered, but so were Pennsylvania and Ohio when they were first occupied by civilization. Wherever there are good lands for farming they will be needed before long for the rapidly increasing population of this nation, which is pushing out in all directions to take possession of all regions that will support human life. Railway building in Northern Minnesota land will go on year by year and farmers will seek out the fertile areas of hard-wood lands which are found at intervals



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in the pine forest. These areas will be cleared, the oak, birch and maple timber sold to manufacturers and the land made into meadows and grain fields. Grand Rapids has already made such a start as a distributing point that will find itself in the line of new railway building.

Grand Rapids occupies a very handsome site of high ground that slopes up gently from the river banks to a spacious plateau. Four business streets have already taken shape, two running parallel to the river and two at right angles to both river and railroad, and crossing the latter. The Mississippi is spanned by a good bridge, and as the town grows the land on the right bank will be wanted for residences. The most conspicuous buildings are the public school house, the two hotels and the churches. The town has already two bright, well conducted newspapers, The Magnet and the Review, which cover diligently the field of home news and push the interests of the town with constant vigilance. Advantageously located business lots cost from \$300 to \$600 dollars and residence lots can be bought from \$50 to \$100. There is no active speculative movement in real estate at present but there is universal confidence in the value of property and the future of the town. The stores carry large stocks of goods, the hotels are filled with guests, even in the mid-winter season, and Grand Rapids makes a very favorable impression on a visitor as a place that is alive and prosperous, and one inhabited by an enterprising class of people who expect to see it have a population of 10,000 within a very few years."

G. H. Hause 10/16/40.

Grand Rapids Notes  
H. H. Hause  
December 17, 1940

Itasca State Park  
Jacob Vradenverg Brower  
V. 11, p. 73,74

"In 1883 a little band of land seekers under the leadership of Peter Turnbull joined together at Park Rapids, Minn., then a frontier town, for the purpose of opening a wagon road to Itasca Lake. They followed the old Hall road of 1875 to Stony Ridge, where the new road was opened in zigzag form to the Iron Corner and Deming, Mary, and Itasca lakes. The early travelers over that hilly and crooked trail will ever remember the tedious hardships experienced on a new wagon road through a trackless forest when nightfall often made progress uncertain, before Itasca Lake could be reached.

From 1883 to 1886, squatters on pine land claims for active lumbermen became a menace to the future park. Not a single one of those settlers made any permanent homes and usually before their proofs were offered at the land office the ownership had been pledged to land monopolists who soon became possessed of every available tract of dense pine timber in the Itasca Basin. Not one of those so-called settlers can now be found on the land they entered. Scrip entries, soldier's additional homestead claims and the indemnity grant to the Northern Pacific Railroad finally placed all the pine lands at Itasca Lake in control of lumbermen, whose avaricious denudation of Minnesota forests has precipitated widespread decay and destruction by forest fires, closing of rivers and lakes by log booms, depletion of the water supply and wholesale destruction of fish and game, by an overpowerful, ever destroying, innumerable organization of human beings who know no better than by striving to determine by whom and how soon the last tree may be cut, to throw a permanent shadow of decay across nature's contribution to human rights and happiness in one of the most natural and beautiful park regions in existence.



Grand Rapids Notes  
H. H. Hause  
December 17, 1940

Cont'd - Itasca State Park

They are seldom prosecuted for infractions of the law, because they are powerful financial and political in the drama of life, feared and catered to by business participants and hundreds of men in official positions."

1930 \*\*\*"Grand Rapids is a wideawake, progressive, advancing town that was listed in the 1930 census as having a population of 3,209, but which in reality has grown since that time to about 4500 population.

"Grand Rapids is fully awake to its summer outing and summer resident possibilities, and it is doing much to make the stays of those fortunate enough to visit G. R. Attractive and pleasant and enjoyable. Every line that may be of interest to the summer folks may be found in the large list of business establishments, and this is one locality where the prices are not 'upped' on the visitors. Close to 100 summer resorts with accommodations for summer visitors are listed in Itasca county of which G. R. is the county seat. These resorts range from farm homes with two to three or four cottages to rent on some beautiful lake, to resorts having as many as 20 to 30 cottages with elaborate main halls with all kinds of facilities for enjoying evenings and other indoor periods.

"Lakes in this territory are crystal clear, with shores that include sandy beaches and the mysterious boggy outlets and bayous that attract the exploring mind. In all are fish of various kinds, some having fine wall-eyed pike and Northern pike fishing, others having bass and crappie, others muskellunge. There are trout streams where the man who likes that kind of sport on woodland spring small streams can get plenty thrills. \*\*\*

\*\*\*Grand Rapids \*\*\* is an interesting place to look over, with its four lakes in the village limits, its paper mill, its exceptionally beautiful fair grounds, schools, and evergreen-decked homesites. \*\*\*" (The Chippewa National Forest comes to the edge of town.)

"G. R. is on the western end of the Mesaba iron range, and mines come to within three miles N.E. of G. R., with the range cutting through the N.W. part of the



Article by A. L. La Freniere in Minn. Conservationist, (continued)  
Mar. 1938.

1938 village to a point about five miles S.W. (Mining this district yet?) The closest actual mining operations in 1938 were at Coleraine and Bovey eight miles N.E. where open pit mining with steam shovels and trains, and similar mining by the conveyor system can be seen. Hundreds of drives through beautiful woodlands, many of them over trails cut to heretofore inaccessible peaces through the wooded country by CCC workers \*\*\*"

The Finnish section of farmland is interesting. Their methods of farming are intensive, and their buildings--some of them, intermingled with others--smack of the old country. On almost any drive wild deer may be seen as G. R. is in the center of the best deer country in Minn.

Three beautiful golf courses--the Pokegama Country club, on Pokegama Lake, S. of G. R. the Otis course at Otis Lodge and the Swan Lake Country club course at Swan Lake.

Two creameries in G. R. handles a million pounds of butterfat a year, and vast quantities of poultry, veal and eggs. The territory around G. R. furnishes the famous Arrowhead potatoes.

Churches of almost all denominations serve the community. The main fraternal orders have lodges, and there is a Lions club and a Rotary club in G. R. The G. R. Commercial club is the leading civic organization.

#### Location

180 miles north of Mpls. over state highway No. 169 and 80 miles west of Duluth on highway No. 2, it is served from the South by No. 169, surfaced all the way from the south, and highway No. 6. No 169 to the N.E. through the iron range towns, No. 38 N. The great Northern furnishes accommodations by rail, and air service is quite

Location - (continued)

extensively used by chartered and privately owned planes that use air ports in and adjacent to G. R. (check present day air service--any commercial a.s.?)



From St. Paul Pioneer Press - Sun. Oct. 22, 1922

*1922* There is a community church, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists have united. It is a handsome church, and a handsome manse. The minister (who is it now?) It was Rev. J. Parkes in 1922) does not preach doctrined sermons. *al*

The schools are impressively housed and very efficient. The new County High school cost (?) \$400,000.00.

#### Industry in Multiple

*1916* Most of the range towns have no industries aside from the mining, but G. R. has a paper mill, a shingle mill, a lath mill and a cooperage works, (or just a heading mill?) The name is the Itasca Cooperage company (with which is incorporated the lath mill). The shingle factory is the White Cedar shingle mill (see if this isn't a department of the paper Co.) The name of the Paper plant is the Itasca Paper company. All three of these concerns are the property of the owners of the St. Paul Dispatch and Pioneer Press, which newspapers are printed on the products of the paper mill. (See if this has changed hands by 1940) The present owners took it over in 1916 (?).

Above the handsome dam beside the mill is a long pond, containing much spruce wood for the making of pulp. Below the dam the river rushes away under a bridge and around a bend to the southward and out of sight. Grand Rapids lies on both banks of the Mississippi River. On the south side there are many large pines and a gentle hill. The county hospital is over there, and a pretty residence section.

From "St. Paul Pioneer Press" - Sun. June 15,  
1930.

"Nestling within a stone's throw of the far famed Pine Country in the heart of 10,000 lakes regions, is G. R.--the trade center of Minnesota's primitive vacation land. With four beautiful lakes wholly or partly inside its limits and the Mississippi running through, G. R. can be at once your playground and your business center. Every advantage of a metropolis is offered to the vacationist; hotels with excellent facilities, garages with complete equipment, large modern stores with the latest and finest in moderately priced merchandise. \*\*\*" Fish, camp, boat, swim, golf, hunt.

There is a branch of the State Agricultural School and experiment Station here. Butter, potatoes, and honey are equal to those produced anywhere. Maple sugar is made in large quantities.

G. R. is the South and West Gateway to the land of pines, in the midst of the lakes and streams which border the road to Minnesota's great wilderness.

#### Easily Accessible From All Points.

Highway 35 from the Twin Cities, No. 3 from Duluth, the "Scenic" from Marcell and International Falls, 8 from Bemidji and Crookston, 34 from Walker and Detroit Lakes and 35 from Mesaba Iron Range converge in G. R. (Check all these for accuracy, and add any more you find exist)



"Compared with modern operations the fur trade was a small business. The crop of many a single township (agricultural at present) far surpasses in value the annual output(fur)of Minnesota at any time. The total value of furs and peltries from the Sioux outfit for the year 1835 was \$59,298.92." Folwell,1,163

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An unanswerable argument by an Indian Chief is found in Bishop Henry Whipple, "Civilization and Christianization of the Ojibways in Minnesota, " in Minnesota Historical Collections,9:130." A Chief asked me if the Jesus of whom I spoke was the same Jesus that my white brother talked to when he was angry or drunk..... 'You have spoken strong words against firewater and impurity;but,my friend,you have made a mistake. These are the words you should carry to your white brothers who bring us the fire-water and corrupt our daughters. They are the sinners,not we.'"---Folwell,1,171.

Before the town of Grand Rapids was founded, there lived near its site an unusually progressive band of Indians, called the Rabbit band from a patriarch of that name. They numbered perhaps 60 to 80. They had houses, stoves, good gardens and fields, and a great deal of stock, horses and cattle. They made much hay and sold it to the lumbermen, and, for heathen Indians, made great progress and were very comfortable. There came a white man from down the river and planted a saloon about two miles from them. He was the first settler in Grand Rapids, I think. In about two years half of that Rabbit band were dead, and the survivors were wretched shivering vagabonds, while the white man had all their former wealth. Some were frozen to death when drunk; some were drowned by the upsetting of their canoes, when they were drunk; some lay down in the snow and took pneumonia; some were burned to death. The saloon keeper had all their cattle, horses, stoves and household goods, and those who remained alive had only an old blanket each.



Mch 29-33

Grand Rapids Herald-Review - Summer

Sept. 3, 1940

March 29, 1933

Early Justice

"Justice in the early days was not too swift or too severe. Most of the troubles in which drunken lumberjacks were concerned were overlooked and forgotten. If the men who were cut or bruised did not care, why should the State? There were no lawyers to prosecute or defend, which also saved trouble.

1893 ✓  
"This concludes a little story about the strongest and most quarrelsome man of the early days of Itasca county (note that above the editor says Christie was not a quarrelsome man.) We have said before that Christie was not, when sober, a fighting man. He had rather a mean sense of humor which other people did not understand. He had overpowering physical strength which made other people fear him. When intoxicated, he was quarrelsome and dangerous. Some of the other residents of the community said that Sam Christie stopped more fights than he ever started. Be that as it may, he lived through more physical assaults than any one of his time. He was killed by Hicks about 1893.

"On the whole, the lumbering sections were not places where men killed with guns and cut with knives as much as in other sections. The fighters of the earlier days were men who used their fists and boots. In fact the use of guns and knives is hardly in line with the traditions of the lumbering sections. They belong more to the early days of the mining sections."

Lumberjacks when sober were not quarrelsome, and those who are best acquainted with the older times say that very seldom would they see a fight in which both parties were completely sober. Groups would be drinking together, somebody would bring up something about logging or about politics which would create argument.

Early Justice - (continued)

March 29, 1933

Soon there would be a fight, and soon thereafter the fighters would be drinking together again. That was the spirit of the section. The gun and knives which figure so largely in the story of Sam Christie were rather unusual.

" \*\*\* Most of these men were remembered not for their bad traits but for their good ones. It was a rough and tumble age in a rough and tumble country. \*\*\*" *Times*

A man had to have certain strong, vigorous characteristics or he could not survive. Those ~~lines~~ made vigorous men. Trees were to be cut, timber hauled and floated down the river. On every hand were activities which made for physical strength and courage, great endurance and ability. The drinking of that day was not so much from a desire to become intoxicated as for a change from the tedium of hard work or an expression of the men's nature. And it was the only form of relaxation or entertainment to be had. The only escape from deadly sameness was through liquor, the only club, the saloon, the only society, its patrons.



Sept. 3, 1940

March 22, 1933

Sam Christie

8/ "Probably the hardest man who escaped violent death more times than any  
in the early days of Itasca county was Sam Christie. \*

1883 "About 1883 Christie came to Grand Rapids. He had been in trouble before  
that time for robbing a man, it is said, and had gone up further toward the Canadian  
border. As the memory of his crime became less acute, he drifted back with a friend  
to Grand Rapids.

" \*\*\* He was a man of great physical strength, so much so that he inspired  
terror in the minds of some weaker men. He was well over six feet tall and weighed  
about 220 pounds. He was all bone and muscle. His wrists and hands were large. He had  
a large nose and black hair. In his later years he had scars all about his face and  
neck. He was cut under both ears. In the origin of these scars is part of the story  
which follows.

"Christie came from Maine and he talked with a down east drawl. He had  
quarreled in Maine and some one had thrown vitriol in his face, which made some deep  
scars. By nature he was not quarrelsome. He had a very crude sense of humor and when  
he joked with men they did not always know that he was joking. His troubles came when  
he was drunk. Christie was a constant, hard drinker. He was always at the bar or over  
the bottle and, while whiskey was not supposed to be in the lumber camps, Jim Sherry,  
for whom Christie worked a good deal, had so many men coming and going that there was  
usually booze in his camps. It was nothing for Christie to drink a quart of whiskey  
as a starter for his drunks. When he was drunk he was a rough, tough man.

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\* This was not his real name. His real name  
appears elsewhere in these notes. It was Sam  
Lamb.

Sam Christie - (continued)

March 22, 1933

1888 or 1889 ✓  
"One day in the early summer of 1888 or 1889 Christie stopped in at Sherry's saloon where Pig Eye Kelly was tending bar. He said things to Kelly which made the little bartender angry. Christie went down to the place where he was staying near the river. Kelly told his friend, Dan McLean, he would give him \$10 to bring Christie back to the saloon. McLean, thinking it was all a joke, went to see Christie and said that here was a good chance to make the \$10, so they walked back to Sherry's.

"Sherry's saloon was located about where the park apposite the paper mill is now found. 'Pig Eye' Kelly looked out the window and he saw his friend, McLean, and his oppressor, Christie, walking up the trail. Taking a .44 rifle, Kelly laid it across some beer kegs or whiskey barrels lying in the saloon and took careful aim at Christie. The bullet entered Christie's body immediately above the heart and passed completely through him. Normally such a condition would cause death. Hugh McDermott had a shack near the hotel, which he was then running, and Christie was put into a bunk. There was no doctor in Grand Rapids at that time, but 'old man' Lewis, whose first name is now forgotten, said that he knew all about bullet wounds and surgery because he had served in the Civil War. He went down to look at the wounded man. He then secured an oak stick and whittled it thin and smooth to a size of about that of the bullet wound. This he put through the wound from front to back, his theory being that the wound should be kept bleeding until there was opportunity for it to heal. In about two days a steamboat came up the river and anchored at Grand Rapids. Christie was put on the boat and taken to Aitkin. In a few weeks time he was back in Grand Rapids just as strong and as thirsty as ever.

"'Pig Eye Kelly', of course, gave himself up, but nobody wanted him. When Christie returned he kind of forgot about the incident, made no complaint against Kelly, and the matter was dropped as being just an incidental affair in the life of the community.



Sam Christie - (continued)

March 22, 1933

"A short time afterward Christie was at a camp on Hay Landing, up the river from Pokegama dam. There he got into a quarrel with 'Kelly the Cook.' 'Kelly the Cook' was armed with a very sharp butcher knife and slashed Christie most horribly. He cut his throat from ear to ear but somehow missed the jugular vein. Christie lay as dead and 'Kelly the Cook' came down to the dam and gave himself up for the murder of this lumberjack. Christie's body was brought down to the dam in a bateau and carried over the dam and put into a boat to bring it to Grand Rapids. When coming down the river Christie sat up and gave a most horrifying yell. He was bloody, but not dead. He was taken to La Prairie where there was a hospital and a doctor. His wounds were sewed up and in a few days he was again around the streets.

"Shortly afterward Christie was in a saloon in Grand Rapids and in a room at the back of the saloon was a man lying drunk. Somebody whispered fearfully to Christie that that was 'Kelly the Cook.' Christie went back to the back of the room, looked at Kelly lying there drunk and said 'Wake the poor devil up, he is sick and probably needs a drink.'

"So it was that 'Kelly the Cook' escaped any serious consequences for his vicious assault with the butcher knife upon the strong man of the woods. It was generally thought that most of these things were as much one man's fault as the other's and consequently there were no prosecutions.

"'Kelly the Cook' went back to cooking and Christie went to the woods.\*\*\*

"Shortly after his experience with 'Kelly the Cook,' Christie was on his way to Bigfork. He stopped at what was called Tweedle's Ranch somewhat above Prairie Lake. Al Blackman, a well known logger and lumberjack, and one of the proprietors of the ranch, was there and Christie and Blackman got into a quarrel. Blackman seized a

Sam Christie - (continued)

March 29, 1933

Mar 29-33

knife and again cut Christie's throat. Again the vital spots were missed and Christie was brought to Grand Rapids where he was sewed up and soon on his way again to other quarrels. Nothing happened, of course, to Blackman, because Christie was forgiving in his nature to those who quarreled with him.

"We are now coming closer to the end of the story of Sam Christie. He was one of 'Sherry's Tigers.' Jim Sherry had a strong, rough bunch of lumberjacks who worked hard in the woods and who drank hard at the bar. Christie was working for Sherry in the early nineties. He was driving team and he took a large amount of pride in his ability to handle horses. One morning he was in Sherry's barn preparing for the day's work and Steve Hicks came in. Hicks was another lumberjack who also handled horses well. While it will never be known as to what the cause of the quarrel might have been, it is thought that they quarreled over the possession of a set of lead lines. Christie had more strength than Hicks, but Hicks seized a barn scraper that was standing nearby and hit Christie a tremendous blow on the jaw. He hit him repeatedly, pounding his head so that Christie was hardly recognizable. At that, he lived some little time, but finally died.

"The death of Christie was not favorable for the future of Steve Hicks. When Christie was alive he forgot and forgave 'Pig Eye Kelly,' 'Kelly the Cook,' and Al Blackman, but Christie was dead and society had to take its revenge upon Hicks. He was taken before the courts, found guilty on a serious charge and sentenced to 10 years in the penitentiary. However, \*\*\* after he had served some two years Al Powers needed a good man with horses, and as Hicks was not reputedly a dangerous man he was pardoned and came back to the woods again.



Sept. 3, 1940

March 15, 1933

### Lumberjack Nicknames

"If a lumberjack had some peculiarly outstanding physical characteristic he would be nicknamed. His real name might be forgotten.

"The basis for some of these names was quite obvious. If a lumberjack was called 'Frenchy' that name could be easily explained. He was a French Canadian and doubtless talked the broken language of that race of people. If a man were called 'Indian Joe' the basis for such a name could be well imagined. Sometimes a lumberjack would be called 'Horse Face' or 'Big Foot,' names for which there is an obvious origin.

"Among the well known lumberjacks of the early days was 'Mosquito Ole' who received his nickname from his long lean arms and his equally spindly legs. 'Pete the Porkie' was another well known lumberjack. He wore his whiskers long in the winter time and they stood out from his cheeks and chin like the quills of a porcupine. \*\*\*"

Another was 'North Dakota,' whose real name was Oleson. When \*\*\* celebrating he would sing the well known song about the Swede from North Dakota. Hence his nickname. In earlier times there was Joseph La Brun who was better known as 'Joe the Bear.' In the winter he wore dark brown whiskers and he had sharp, small eyes and he walked silently on moccasined feet. 'Paddy the Priest' \*\*\* was a man of obvious education. It is said that he studied for the priesthood, but became dissipated and was expelled from college. Thus he became a lumberjack, but he had a good title. 'Paddy the Pig' was a name applied to at least ~~of~~ two men well known in Grand Rapids in the early days. 'Larry the Brute' was Arthur O'Leary and he secured his name from the fact that whenever he was intoxicated he would always repeat, 'I am a brute, and I howl when the moon shines!'

Other men secured their names from their occupations, 'Paddy the Rosser' was

*\* Can I find this song of the lumberjacks in print?*

## Lumberjack Nicknames - (continued)

March 15, 1933

exceptionally skillful in cutting or trimming down the end of the log which dragged on the ground when timber was skidded on the old fashioned drags in the woods. This name was given to him because of his special ability in this direction. In the older times before the invention of the jammer for loading logs the process was one which required more skill with chains and timber than the present, and 'Wheel-Em-Up-Murphy' was another well known man. 'Quarter Post Kelly' was one of the well known cruisers of this section many years ago. He was always talking about a certain quarter post which he had located. \*\*\* There was, also, 'Hungry Mike' Sullivan, named for his tremendous appetite. (Check with Herald-Review on some of the famous eating feats of 'Hungry Mike and his hungry brother Jim, and get facts as to some titanic meals.)

1892  
"Pig Eye Kelly" was one of the well known characters of 40 (now 47) years ago in Grand Rapids. He first came to work in the woods but later became a bartender. He was named for the fact that his eyes were small and he was usually squinting through them. He was not a large or quarrelsome man but he did one thing which gave him considerable fame. He shot Sam Christie, one of the well known lumberjacks of his time through the chest with a 44 rifle.

"Pig Eye" did not come to justice but he had a sad ending. It seemed that he had served in the Civil War. He was a servant for one of the officers of the Union army but did not really enlist. When he became older he was in need of money and sought to secure a pension from the government. Because of irregularities in his service or record, he could not get it. When word came that this was the case he went to his room and took a dose of laudenum and passed peacefully on to the next world."

One seldom sees any virgin pine now, and the lumberjack went with the big trees. The real lumberjack followed the woods for a living most of his life. He may



Lumberjack Nicknames - (continued)

March 15, 1933

have come from Maine or Michigan. From Michigan he would have migrated to Wisconsin, thence to Minnesota, and from here on to the big woods of the west. He belongs to the past.

"No group of men in the story of the development of the nation had more glamour connected with his life than the real lumberjack of the past. The miner, the cowboy, are romantic characters, but no more so than the men who cut down the big trees of Itasca county, and who made up a large part of the citizenry of Grand Rapids in earlier days."

Aug. 30, 1940

1933

Indian Thrift & Honesty

"It is generally reputed that the Indians do not have a good sense of the value of money and that they waste their payments (above referred to). The story has been told of the Indian who sold his timber. The loggers came along and cut it down, leaving the land clear of trees. They paid the Indian his money. He immediately started out to buy a ton of rutabaga seed. His purpose was to seed down the whole quarter-section to rutabagas. He said that he liked rutabagas and that the deer liked them, and consequently he was going to raise rutabagas for himself and for the whole outdoors.

"Most Indians are very thrifty. This comes about by necessity because few of them have any money. While some of the younger group of Indians do not have a very good sense of the value of a dollar, the older ones do have.

<sup>1882</sup>  
<sup>1898</sup> "We know of no one who has had a larger experience in dealing with Indians than Ernest Flemming of Bena. Mr. Flemming came to Grand Rapids in 1882, on December 13th of that year. \*\*\* He first cooked in the woods and about 35 years ago (about 1898) he went into business at Bena. There he has a large, modern mercantile establishment. (see if still there in 1940) When asked his opinion of Indian thrift, he stated that the older generation of Indians always paid their obligations <sup>when</sup> they could get the money with which to do it. Care must be taken in dealing with Indians so that they are not extended too much credit, for their ability to pay is limited. But evidently the credit problem is no different on the reservation than it is in Grand Rapids or any other place. Mr. Flemming reports the Indians as careful buyers and extremely honorable in their dealings, with, of course, the exceptions found in any race of human beings.

2-Book



Indian Thrift & Honesty - (continued)

March 8, 1933

1843  
1889  
1855  
1848  
"There are still some old Indians up on the reservation. Indians begin to look old however quite young in life. \*\*\* One of the oldest Indians goes by the name of Mrs. Chief Flatmouth. (see if she still lives) She is the widow of Chief Flatmouth, the last chief to whose authority the federal government gave any recognition. She lives near Leech Lake. Also among the Leech Lake Indians is found Caus-Co-Day who was born in 1843. (same query) The birth dates of these Indians are fairly accurate according to the Indian authorities. The rolls were begun in the year 1889 and, of course, the ages of a great many of the present Indians was then definitely known. Moreover the treaty of 1855 mentioned or recognized a large number of Indians who were then very young and some of them are still alive (now?) Another Indian of old age now at Onigum (check this man--Onigum is in Cass Co.) is O-Zow-E-Shib who was born in 1848.

1853  
"One of the oldest Indians in Itasca county, Bob Mosemo, lives at Inger. (check on him) While the government does not recognize Indian chiefs the Indians still do, and Bob Mosemo should really be called Chief Mosemo, for he is recognized as the head of a large Indian population. He was born in 1853 according to the records, and is then 80 years of age (in 1933). One of the most distinguished looking Indians of the section, and one of the best known, is Wah-Booze, whose English name would be John Rabbit. He lives on Leech Lake (check) and is an Indian of outstanding personality. He was born in 1854. \*\*\*.

"Grand Rapids should have a particular interest in the administration of Indian affairs. The head of the Consolidated Indian Agency at Cass Lake and the man in charge of the Indian affairs of this section is a native of this community. He is Mark Burns, who was born on Pokegama Lake and who was raised in Grand Rapids when the

Indian Thrift & Honesty - (continued)

March 8, 1933

community was very young. His mother was a Chippewa and his father was Chris Burns, well known to the older residents. The Burns home was across from the present site of the paper mill. Mark Burns went to Philadelphia to school as a youth. He entered the service of the federal Department of Agriculture in 1903 and in 1911 he went to the Indian Department. He knows the Indians because they are, in part, his own people. He knows the Indian language, and, of course, is in the deepest sympathy with the best solutions of the Indian problems."

(Check on present status of Indian funds, and whether payments still go on in 1940, etc.)



Jan 9-94

Grand Rapids Hist.  
Hause  
1-3-1941

Grand Rapids Magnet

Vol.3 - 31

P.1, Col.4  
Tuesday  
1-9-94

GRAND RAPIDS AND ITASCA COUNTY  
An Exhaustive Resume of the Unparalleled  
Growth of Grand Rapids and Her  
Bright Prospects For the Future  
Itasca County's Present Prosperity and Some  
Statements Regarding the Wonderful  
Resources of a Wonderful Region.

There is a vast amount of logic in the oft quoted phrase "God made the country, man made the town," but it is also true that the extent and importance of towns and cities evolved by the hand of man is dependent upon the character of the country of which they are the natural centers. It would be impossible to build up a New York upon the desert of Sahara, or a Minneapolis in the heart of the prairies of the Dakotas to make it possible for a city to become great in wealth or population, she must be the natural center for a rich and diversified scope of country. There must be a union of favorable conditions which demand a center for the gathering of commerce and its distribution, for the production of those necessary of trade and use, which the cunning hand of the mechanic and manufacturer produces from the raw material. There must be a natural covering of the lines of trade and travel to a fixed point, and there must also be a contingent and available supply of raw material for the factories and shops in order for a city to assume those proportions which make it as one whose destiny is to become great.

That Grand Rapids occupies this natural position and possesses these necessary natural conditions none can doubt. Located as she is, far enough from Duluth, St. Paul and Minneapolis, so as not to interfere with their business or interests, the location is a natural one, and was marked out long before the hand of man began to prepare her to receive it.

It is true that man sometimes attempts to build cities and towns where nature never intended they should be placed. Such we have had, but they have waned until there is nothing left of them but a memory.

In looking at Grand Rapids, the future distributing point for the northwest, one can see at a glance that its excellent geographical location is all that is claimed for it. In what has been wont to be regarded as a worthless barren wilderness whose only value was its pine - the worth of which depended upon a demand elsewhere - Time, railroads and the industry of the explorer is fast working a change. The agricultural lands, the iron and other minerals are factors that are to make Grand Rapids a future metropolis.

It has also begun to become apparent that the great natural lines of travel and freight transportation between Duluth and Winnipeg must pass through Grand Rapids. So well known is this fact that several new railroads will be seeking an entrance into Grand Rapids during the year of 1894.

P. 1, Col.  
1-4

Every stranger who visits Grand Rapids for the first time is at once impressed with the beauty of the townsite and its natural location. When they learn that it is but three years old, they are delighted with the enterprise of its citizens. When they view its mammoth mercantile houses, its three solid banking institutions, its numerous retail stores, its handsome private residences, its miles of broad streets and avenues, with their wide sidewalks, illuminated at night with lamps, its three places of worship its handsome temple of learning, and its well-kept and commodious hotels, they admit that "Man made the town."

But as yet all this is but preliminary work. The citizens have always been averse to booming. They preferred that the natural resources of Grand Rapids should become known to the outside world by its own merits rather than by loud acclamations of a great future. Now that its nucleus has been prepared and its infancy days passed, its foundation laid upon a solid basis, it is proposed to make its numerous advantages known to the outside world in a modest and becoming manner.

As before stated in this article, railroads are already recognizing the importance of Grand Rapids as a coming commercial center. In the spring the Duluth and Winnipeg division of the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic system will extend its road west and northwest to Crookston and Winnipeg. The Duluth, Mesaba & Northern railroad must build its present terminus westward along the range, which will bring it to Grand Rapids. The Great Northern has already had its surveyors through Grand Rapids and located its line. There will be a continuation of the Fosston branch on its way to Duluth. An independent company, has just been organized to build a road directly north from Minneapolis to Grand Rapids, on its way to the Rainey river. Besides the railroad there is the river transportation to Aitkin, connecting them with the Northern Pacific system.

It will thus be seen that Grand Rapids will have as fine a system of railroads as any city in the west. It will have the finest transportation facilities for the rapid transportation of its manufactured goods.

Up to the present time the principal industries have been its logging and mining. In the former, about 5,000 men are engaged. All supplies for them are purchased at Grand Rapids and distributed from here. The mining operations on the western end of the Mesaba range have drawn large stocks of merchandise and supplies from here. Two sawmills have done a good local business. In the early spring an excelsior factory is to be started. This will make a ready market for a large quantity of wood, which must be hauled to town, thereby giving employment to a number of men.

Another mill of large capacity has chosen its site and will be erected in the spring. On account of the quantity of hardwood in the vicinity of Grand Rapids, several manufacturers of furniture have recently looked over the water power privileges, and it is confidently expected that several will locate here in the near future.

Its water power is of the finest in the state. Three miles above Grand Rapids upon the Mississippi river, is the Pokegama dam, where the largest and most extensive dam of the great governmental system of the Mississippi reservoirs is located. This great work, while designed to equalize the flow of the river and to enable the holding of the surplus water, provides at



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P. 1, once the largest and safest natural reservoir for holding logs to be found  
Col. 1-4 anywhere on the continent. From this safe and commodious storage - capable  
of continuing thousands of millions of feet of logs - can the regular supply  
for any number of mills located between the dam and Grand Rapids be sluiced  
at the pleasure of the owner.

On account of the exhaustless quantities of the finest brick yard was  
established here two years ago. The proprietor met with such success in the  
sale of his products that he was forced to enlarge his facilities last spring.

Upon the organization of Itasca county, Grand Rapids was named for the  
capital town. This action was approved by the voters at the last general  
election, which permanently located the county seat for all time.

It has an excellent system of municipal government and its local affairs  
are well conducted. At a recent election \$15,000 worth of bonds were voted  
for water works, which will be erected in the course of a few months.

Grand Rapids has been termed the "new Northern wonder" on account of its  
growth and development. Such an application is a proper one. Its course  
has ever been onward and upward. Its bright star of destiny is in the  
ascendency. It has the resources, the people and the means to take its place,  
within a few brief years, among the brilliant gems of Minnesota's coronet of  
thriving prosperous cities.

no

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Grand Rapids Magnet

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GRAND RAPIDS AS A SUMMER RESORT

J. Adambede

Situated as it is, high and dry on the headwaters of the Mississippi and closely surrounded by a score of beautiful lakes in which fish plentifully abound, with pleasant summer day and cool nights, Grand Rapids is destined to become the most attractive and popular resort in Northern Minnesota. Steamers ply to and fro from the upper Mississippi to the lakes through channels deep enough to admit of navigation, and thus can be had the most delightful excursions in a real fairy land. Lots are so cheap that they can be secured and summer cottages maintained at a nominal expense on the bank of the river or lakes, where fishing, boating and other pleasures may be indulged to the fullness of desire. As yet no united effort has been made to attract summer visitors, though a considerable number have found there way into this delightful land during the heated season, and the reports thus sent abroad have attracted much attention to Grand Rapids at the Queen City of the summer realm. June, July and August are the most charming trio of the year, and during these months there will be many visitors along the lakes and rivers. Grand Rapids is well provided with hotel facilities. It is only a ten minute's walk from the hotels to several lakes, while the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic railroad runs into the entire lake region to the north and west. The country roads are in good condition and afford charming drives amid innumerable sparkling miniature lakes and along the banks of the Father of Waters. In such an Eden as this the weary business man from the city may seclude himself for a season and add years to his life by physical enjoyment and complete mental relaxation. In vain may he look elsewhere for the quiet and the cool refreshing fountains of nature which he finds here, all of which can be enjoyed for a mere pittance composed with the expense at places of less enjoyment but more note. Were the real advantages of this region known to the sweltering millions in our great cities, Grand Rapids would immediately become the Mecca for the summer pilgrim. Bathing in the salt water at ocean resorts makes the ladies beautiful locks (unless they can be taken off) coarse and harsh enough to be woven into gunny sacks, but to bathe in the Minnesota lakelets is a delight untold.

The new northern wonder of growth and development, Grand Rapids, Minnesota, is located on the great western sweep of the Mississippi, on the plateau, 3,000 miles from the gulf, where in matchless lakes and streams are gathered the Mississippi headwaters. The plateau is over 1,200 feet above the sea, and in extent more than 5,000 square miles, affording, by all the modifying influence of a wondrous nature, the most inviting climate on earth. The slopes from this plateau, east to Lake Superior, south along the Mississippi valley itself, westward to the vast treeless prairies, and north to the great water system of Rainey River and Lake, our northern boundry, comprise the newly opening region, which, as fast as investigated, becomes the wonder of the continent. Its wealth in pine and other timber, agricultural lands and water powers are untold.

Pro



Central to the whole, Grand Rapids is set like the chief gem of the coronet. Located on the magnificent water power for which the place is named, it has below it, as to its water system, the whole of Mississippi navigation, and above it the reaches of the river and its connected lakes, that are navigable by steamers hundreds of miles, ending with the great State Park, which has, by the munificence of Minnesota, been constructed, surrounding Itasca, the vertible head of the Father of Waters. As to timber, it is in the very heart of the standing pine of the state, shown by the census of 1891 to be upwards of 50,000,000,000 feet, representing \$100,000,000 of absolute wealth, with inexhaustible stores of all kinds of hard and soft wood suitable for all kinds of manufactures, while a market craving all that could be produced is offered northward to Canada, eastward down the lakes from Duluth southward down the Mississippi, but more than all, to the westward by the treeless prairies which, now developed into rich and populous states, stretch from the very boarder of Itasca and Beltrami counties to the Rocky mountains, offering to take all at our own price. As to iron, higher grades of ore are being found than yet discovered elsewhere, and with so much cheaper production, and lighter grades by railroad down the easy slope of the St. Louis - that both ranges are, as it were, with their immense stores, placed in the very lap of Duluth for reduction and manufacture or water shipment.

The area of these treasures, of which Grand Rapids is the commercial, as it is the political capitol, exceeds 20,000 square miles. Central in it is Itasca county, of which Grand Rapids is the county seat. It has an area of 5,662 square miles of land and 117 square miles of water in its wonderful lakes - a total area of about 4,000,000 acres. Thus Itasca county is the largest county in this state of large counties. It is also as may be supposed to be, the chief lumbering county in the state, as Grand Rapids is, and of course, will continue to be, the base of supplies for all that immense business.

The county has a magnificent water system, comprised by the Mississippi crossing east and west at its southerly end, and the Big and Little Forks of Rainey River, making two fertile valleys their entire length North and South, from their head near Grand Rapids to their junction with the Boundry river. Also, of minor streams, those on the east side make into the St. Louis, and on the west into water flowing into the Red River valley. Myriads of beautiful lakes abound between all the streams. Rich farming lands abound in the most beautiful natural locations for homes for the people. The region immediately around Grand Rapids is composed very largely fo as fine agricultural land as can be found in the state. It is true that these lands in the main are heavily timbered with maple, birch, ash and the oaks, but these varieties of wood are now in great demand among builders and manufacturers, and are of more value really than pine, and hence these lands will be cleared up very rapidly, and when cleared up they will be found as productive as any in the northwest; and then, the whole region lies so near Duluth that our farmers will always be able to secure the very highest prices for all their surplus produces. But, rich

yes

Tuesday  
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and productive as this region is, yet, owing to the rapidity with which Grand Rapids is destined to be built up, it is very certain that our farmers, though they should be numbered by the thousand, will, for many years, find a home market - the best of all markets - for all the products of their farms that they will have for sale. In this connection, we would like to say that, while this region has, until recently, been almost a terra incognita even to the masses of the people of our own state, yet there are thousands and tens of thousands of acres of choice government lands in this county subject to homestead entry; and from the rapidity with which the homesteaders and farm-hunters are already coming in - although there has been no effort made to advertise the county - we feel warranted in predicting that there will be the greatest rush here of land hunters during the coming season that has been seen in any section of the country.

The railroad system has been planned in the very fullness of the chief objects sought. The Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic road was wisely located so as to traverse from Duluth to Winnipeg the very center of this immense wealth. Connecting the two extreme points, Lake Superior and Manitoba, it is also the means of building Grand Rapids up, as the great inland point between the two extremes. But equally important to us, this road also embraces the prairie region, and by its line westward to the Red River from Grand Rapids, assures us that great traffic, taking our lumber to the Dakotas and bringing back their grain. Duluth is 97 miles distant, and no other large towns near enough Grand Rapids to come in for the least division of this business. Grand Rapids, being central in this Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic system, is the future and permanent headquarters for the railroad business, division terminals and shops. Other roads, including the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific, are already looking in this direction, and a great railroad center is among the probabilities of the future.

The country round about in every direction from Grand Rapids is a veritable sportsman's paradise. It abounds with numerous clear and beautiful lakes, and in all of them can be found the choicest of fish in great abundance, while everywhere deer, elk, caribou, bear and water fowl are found in great numbers. Three beautiful little lakes lie within one and one half miles of Grand Rapids, while a drive of less than three miles will convey pleasure seekers to Pokegama lake, which is about as large a body of water as the far-famed Minnetonka, and which is the more beautiful lake of the two. Small steamboats and club floats convey sportsmen from lake to lake, along the rivers into the forest fastnesses for a hundred miles, and beyond these, in smaller streams, delightful canoe journeys can be taken, limited only by the hardihood of the tourist and his skill as a woodsman and hunter. A continuation of the same water-way will take the adventurer for the entire distance by boat, 150 miles, to Itasca Park, surrounding the Mississippi's actual sources. As to water-fowl, this region is the northern hatchery for ducks, the vast rice fields offering probably the finest duck shooting in the country."



Feb 13-94

Grand Rapids History  
Mr. Edward Sumner (Hause)  
Jan. 10, 1941.

Grand Rapids Magnet  
Tues. Feb. 13, 1894,  
Vol. 3-36, P. 1, Col. 2.

"The Coming Town

Grand Rapids, Minn., is a busy little logging and lumbering town on the upper Mississippi. Its principal industries are logging and mining, and supplies for some 5,000 loggers being purchased at Grand Rapids. It has two local saw mills and another mill has chosen a site and will be erected in the spring. An excelsior factory will also be started in the spring, which will make a ready market for a large quantity of wood. On account of the quantity of hardwood in the vicinity of Grand Rapids, several manufacturers of furniture have recently looked over the water privileges and it is expected that some of them will locate there in the near future. The water-power of Grand Rapids is one of the finest in the state. Three miles above the town on the Mississippi river is the Pokegama dam, where the largest and most extensive dam of the government system of the Mississippi reservoirs is located. The work, while designated to utilize the flow of the river and to hold the surplus water provides a large and safe natural reservoir for holding logs, which can supply any number of mills located between the dam and Grand Rapids to be sluiced at the pleasure of the owner. -

Mississippi Valley Lumberman."

G. H. Hause 1/2/41.

Jan 1-95

Grand Rapids History,  
Mr. Edward Summer (Hause)  
Jan. 10, 1941.

Grand Rapids Magnet  
Tues. Jan. 1, 1895,  
Vol. 4, -31, P. 1, Col. 2-3.

# "Retrospective

-o-

## A Very Satisfactory Showing of Grand Rapids'

1894

### Growth During the Year 1894.

It is a proper thing, at the close of a year to take a retrospective view of it, and see if it has been a satisfactory one. Business men closely scan their books, as they make up their balances for the ending year. All branches of business do the same thing. And it is right and proper for communities to follow the same plan by taking a retrospective glance at the history of its town, and the progress made by it during the year.

1894

This, then being true, it will be in order for Grand Rapids to view what development it has made during the year 1894.

There is no necessity for any explanations or apologies, for what it has not done. On the contrary, there are good grounds for hearty congratulations for what it has accomplished. It is an incontrovertible fact, that the year just closed, has been one of the hardest financially, in the history of the country. Under such circumstances it was thought that very little would be done in Grand Rapids toward the development or upbuilding. Nearly every other town was happy if it could hold its own and not retrograde, but Grand Rapids could not



Grand Rapids Magnet, Tues. Jan. 1, 1895 - continued.

stand still. Its citizens are not of a disposition that allow hard times or closeness of money to stop the growth of the town. Whenever a project was discussed for further upbuilding or advancement of the village, the necessary means were forthcoming to accomplish it. As a result of this enterprize, Grand Rapids stands proudly at the head of towns in the state for money expended in buildings and improvements, in proportion to its population and age.

The question, then naturally arises if such sums are expended during a season of greatest financial depression, what will it do when money is abundant? Let the answer be, our magnificent growth and development during the year 1894.

The remarkable growth of Grand Rapids during the year just closed is a source of surprise to every stranger. The reputation of the town for enterprise and business energy has become more than local.

It is extremely gratifying to go away from home and hear the words of praise sung for Grand Rapids. From everyone comes the cheering remark: 'You have got a bright town up there which is destined to become a thriving city,' and the facts of our growth warrants the prediction. Without a desire to exaggerate or boom, the Magnet what town in Minnesota can point to more substantial improvements made during the year 1894, in spite of the extreme depression of the money market?

The money furnished for these improvements has come from residents of Grand Rapids, who show their faith and confidence in the future of the village by putting their means into it. If its future

1894

1894

Grand Rapids Magnet, Tues. Jan. 1, 1895 - continued.

was not all problematical there would not be that willingness to back any legitimate with abundance of capital.

Notably among the improvements during the past year, comes first, the rebuilding of the Hotel Pokegama, at a cost of \$15,000. It is conceded that the hotel is a model of architecture and convenience. Steam-heated, electric lights and water through the entire building, makes it a model hostelry. Then follows the new village hall, the county jail and other public buildings.

To demonstrate the permanency of the town, the erection of numerous handsome private residence is a most pleasing feature. For examples, there are the Know, E. A. Kremer, T. H. Hennessy and Gamache houses. All fine structures, of the latest style of architecture and in every way creditable to cities the size of Duluth. If Grand Rapids was not a permanent and substantial town, people would not put large sums of money into new homes when they could get along with cheap ones.

The completion of one of the best systems of Water-works in the state is an assurance of the future safety of the village against any attacks of from serious conflagrations.

Then comes the electric light system just finished by Dr. Howes. Like the water-works it is complete and satisfactory and beyond the expectation of a village the age of Grand Rapids. And to crown the public conveniences there is a telephone system all over town.

Strangers may, perhaps think that the pace of development and upbuilding is a little too rapid and a halt will have to be called.



Grand Rapids Magnet, Tues. Jan. 1, 1895 - continued.

Should anyone labor under the misapprehension it would be as well for them to dismiss it from their minds at once. Grand Rapids has not gone ahead of its resources, which has not yet commenced to be developed. As stated in the Magnet on previous occasions, very few towns have such marvelous resources to rely upon for future prosperity, lumbering, mining, agricultural and a magnificent water power. These certainly are enough to cause the utmost faith in the future of the town. It will not be long before capitalists and farmers will avail themselves of the magnificent opportunities for money making that lies dormant here.

1894

Viewing the growth of Grand Rapids during the year 1894 every citizen has cause to feel proud of it, more especially as it was accomplished when other places were satisfied in holding their own. There is every reason to believe that the present year will witness the greatest growth that Grand Rapids has had in its history. Every indication points to it. Had it not been for the stringency in the money market last year, many improvements would have been made. With the money market easier and restoration of public confidence, improvements that were contemplated in 1894 will be carried out in 1895."

1894  
1895

G. H. Hause 1/2/41.

Apr. 21-95  
1895

Grand Rapids History  
Mr. Edward Sumner (Hause)  
Jan. 10, 1941

Grand Rapids Magnet  
Tues. April 21, 1865  
Vol. 5-47, P. 1, Col. 3-6.

### Grand Rapids Gain.

The State Locates the Sub-Experimental Farm

At This Point.

### A Valuable Aid

To the Growing Agricultural Interests of  
Northern Minnesota's Extensive Domain.

Through the location of the state sub-experimental farm at Grand Rapids, which was decided upon by the Board of Regents last Thursday, all of Northern Minnesota will be rapidly advanced in the lines of agricultural development. It will benefit our neighbors eastward more than those who are equi-distant west of here and, while some of our Carleton county friends evidently feel sore because they failed to secure this valuable institution, which they would have prized so highly, there is no disposition here to crow over their defeat although a full appreciation of the great benefits to be derived by this particular section from a rapid advancement of its agricultural resources is felt by every citizen of this community. The selection was not made without the most careful investigation as to what such a



95  
Grand Rapids Magnet, Tues. Apr. 21, 1865 - continued.

gro  
institution could show concerning the advantages of Northern Minnesota. It is in the line of providing. 'The greatest good for the greatest number' and within five years the wisdom of the choice will be completely demonstrated.

The gentlemen who reported in favor of Itasca county, Minnesota, are disinterested, thoroughly experienced and able experts who examined the soils and advantages of fifteen counties and viewed the subject from every standpoint before rendering their decision. It is particularly well known that they took abundant time in the matter for those who know not the necessities of such an investigation were disposed to find fault with the delay.

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Those who are familiar with some of the capabilities of these northern, Minnesota lands are satisfied that the state experiments have a genuine surprise awaiting them here in the prodigality with which nature will reward their efforts. Numerous efforts heretofore made by individuals in this county have given highly satisfactory results in agriculture, as shown by our county fairs, particularly the one held last September and by the Itasca county exhibit at the State Fair. These efforts have been quite valuable in a local way but their effects have not been far reaching for other communities of the Northwest make strong local assertion of their capabilities. These results, however, backed up by the results of official reports that cannot be gainsaid will give a prominence to the soil and advantages of northern Minnesota that is impressive on the general public both east and west. In advertising

95  
Grand Rapids Magnet, Tues. Apr. 21, 1865 - continued.

the merits of Itasca county the official reports of the experimental station will be of inestimable value.

Every settler that opens a farm adds to the taxable wealth of the county and increases the value of his neighbor's land as well as his own. New settlers require some, at least, of the products raised by older settlers and in all communities trade naturally springs up between the residents. Itasca county's agricultural development has the added advantages of being near the iron mining region and Duluth, which should be very favorable markets for any overplus of products that may be raised. It behooves the business men to bring the interests of the producers and consumers close together if they want to crown this agricultural development with the greatest success. It will grow very rapidly with the aid of these business men and it is well known that they have made most strenuous efforts in the initial work of agricultural progress. They have done a great deal to aid settlers in locating upon the government lands of this locality.

In addition to the 1,500,000 acres of government lands that are open to homesteaders in this county - free of cost after five years settlement and obtainable at \$1.25 per acre on six months residence - there are over a million acres of deeded lands well located that can be bought at from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per acre. The officials of the Duluth land office, on Nov. 27, last, gave the following report: " In Itasca county there are 355,482 acres surveyed and 1,226,000



Grand Rapids Magnet, Tues. Apr. 21, 1865- continued.

built and in good condition for the use of the state officials. Seventy acres of gently undulating fronting on a broad highway near the Prairie river, are subdued and ready for crops while the rest of the 455 acres consists of small meadows surrounding handsome little lakes with a background of timber; mostly birch, poplar and small pines, reaching up the Prairie river, the valley of which is the finest in the State for the live stock industry. The property being ready for active use meets the desires of the officers who want to go right ahead this season with their experimental work. The buildings are located only a mile and half from the Itasca county court house and less than a mile from the Duluth & Winnepeg railway.

Mar. 7  
1891

Ex -Gov. William R. Merriam signed the act organizing Itasca on March 7, 1891, temporarily locating the county seat at Grand Rapids which was then a mere hamlet consisting mostly of lumbermen's log buildings on the Mississippi, just below the picturesque Pokegama Falls. The temporary location was made permanent at the succeeding fall election after a hard fight with La-Prairie which was quite a town two miles down the river. Since then Grand Rapids has swiftly forged ahead as a center of business, hotels and homes, all possessing all the advantages of metropolitan life. The translation of the surrounding timber lands into farms began only three years ago. Before that time farming was beneath the dignity of the sturdy sons of Itasca.

Grand Rapids is situated upon an attractive bend in the Mississippi and is this upper valley what St. Paul was to the lower valley in the early fifties. The hunting and fishing in this region is famous and attracts many well to do pleasure seekers who find an agreeable and well equipped headquarters at the capital of Itasca county." G. H. Hause 1/6/41.

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Grand Rapids  
Herald Review  
Wednesday  
July 6, 1932  
P. 1, Col. 1.

"Pokegama has doubtless had a more romantic history than any other lake in this section. On this page is presented a photograph of what was believed to be the first frame structure ever built on the shores of this lake. It was not the first house for probably there have been log structures on the shores of Pokegama for a hundred years. It was the first frame building, as far as can be known. Fred Willman, who now resides at Cut Foot Sioux, lived on it as a boy. On another page in the paper is a description of an event of about forty years ago. The house was located on Moose Point.

We do not know who the earliest settlers on Pokegama may have been. Mr. Willman remembers that Duncan Harris lived at the lake at that time and that the late Mike Jordan was also a resident of that section.

Black's Arm to Pokegama, that area which extends eastward from the Pokegama bridge, was named for William Black, who lived on a farm at the extreme east end of the lake. For some years he operated a farm there for Sam Hamilton, an early-day logger.

Jo Gould lake was named for Jo Gould, an early settler on this lake which lies between Pokegama and the Mississippi river. The point extending between the river and this lake was called Pokegama Point in the earlier days and it played an important part in the life of the section before Grand Rapids was established. Two men who became prominent in Grand Rapids lived on Pokegama point. One was Bob McCable who later moved to the Rapids and another was Al Nason, very well known to the older residents of the community. Both of these men had reputations for great physical strength and were among the leaders of their time.

1884  
George Galbreath well remembers an early trip on Pokegama. He came up the Mississippi river on a steamboat in 1884 and desired to cross the lake which he then saw for the first time. He was to cross with some Indians who were drunk. They walked to the lake and embarked in birchbark canoes at about the site of the golf course. The Indians were singing or quarreling but did not let their condition interfere with getting safely across the lake in their frail canoes. Across the lake on Moose Point was a large log house belonging to Charles Lyons, an Indian. When the party reached that house it was decided to have a dance. A man by the name of Burns, who lived further down on what now is called Sherry's Arm, was summoned to bring his fiddle. He made music for the white and redskins to dance until he got drunk and fell onto his fiddle and broke it. Then the young Indians took up some pans and beat upon them with sticks for the continuance of the dance. Mr. Galbreath went outside and rolled himself up in his blanket in the grass and went to sleep while the dance was in progress. When he woke up in the morning the Indians were lying around drunk and the house was completely burned.



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While we are speaking of Pokegama lake we should like to give some better information concerning the meaning of the word Pokegama. Several have assumed that Pokegama meant 'Spider.' However, the Chippewa term for spider is entirely different. Finding this to be the case we sought the most definite information upon the meaning of this word. Thus we wrote to M. L. Burns, superintendent of the Consolidated Chippewa Agency at Cass Lake, and a man well informed in all Indian affairs. The term Pokegama refers to the fact that the lake is found off from the main course or channel of the Mississippi river. Mr. Burns describes its meaning in the following way:

"The word has varied meanings but the right meaning I believe is 'off from the main course or channel,' in the same waters only located off to one side. No doubt this has reference to the Mississippi river, Pokegama, off to one side. Pokega, meaning a trail deviating from the main highway, being a part of the system only being located off the main course.'

The change of the meaning of the word Pokegama will make considerable difference with some stories which might be told about the lake. It was thought that by the fact that the lake had so many arms spreading out from the main body of water that it resembled, in a general way, a spider. Evidently a wrong conception of the meaning of the word has prevailed. In this the Herald-Review has shared.

Most of the lakes in this region do not have Indian names. Of course there is Pokegama, Wabana, Winnibigoshish. The reasons for more ordinary names to lakes is that this immediate section was not a prominent Indian country. The Chippewas did not come onto the Prairie and the Bigfork rivers as they did not like this section as well as the country further to the west. Pokegama, however, was a favorite lake with the Indians as it is with the white men. It was lined with great timber. It possessed the finest of fishing. It had attractions of many kinds for the red man.

A book could be written about Pokegama lake and the people who lived near to it. It would be a very interesting book with many elements of lasting romance. With many scores of miles of shore line, Pokegama has many features which mark it as one of the outstanding lakes in Minnesota."

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Grand Rapids  
Herald Review  
July 6, 1932  
P. 7, Col. 1.

"A WILD COUNTRY - FORTY YEARS AGO

Government Botanist Learned of Indians, at First Hand at Pokegama.

1889 ✓  
The following account of the adventures of early settlers on the shore of Pokegama lake was printed in Minneapolis paper of 1889 or 1890. The date was not given on the clipping which is still in the possession of Fred J. Willman of Cut Foot Sioux Inn. Mr. Willman found the clipping and the photograph which is reproduced on the front page this week, while looking through an old trunk which had belonged to his mother.

Some of the statements made by the government botanist, Dr. Sandberg, are slightly misleading. It must be remembered that he was a stranger here, and not familiar with local conditions as they existed more than forty years ago.

Here is his account of early homesteading:

'Two brave Minneapolis women and a stout hearted 16-year-old lad all alone in the wilderness, with no neighbors but an old hermit and a rum frenzied band of ghost dancing Chippewa - that was the rather unusual state of affairs which Dr. J. H. Sandberg, the government botanist, ran across in his latest wanderings through the wilds of northern Minnesota. The women were holding down valuable pine claims for their husbands and were 'roughing' it all that the term implies.

The doctor has just returned from his two week's trip to the Lake Pokegama country in Itasca county, and he tells a most interesting story of his experiences. The present terminus of the Winnipeg road is at Grand Rapids in Itasca county and almost ten miles from the lake.

It is a wild pine country, almost uninhabited by man, and Dr. Sandberg's surprise can be imagined when he found, on the farther lake shore two Minneapolis matrons, one accompanied by her 16-year-old-boy, holding down claims of 160 acres of pine land each. The rough experience they had with the Indians not long ago will be read with interest in Minneapolis. The ladies are Mrs. John R. Willman, of 225th St. N. E., and Mrs. Frank Thomas, Mrs. Willman's neighbor. Mr. Willman is a miller in Pillsbury A mill, and will be remembered as a witness in the now famous Heilpern case. Heilpern at one time boarded at his house. Last spring early the men went to Pokegama and staked out their claims. Not being able personally to occupy them for the six months necessary before a title can be secured they left wives as deputies, with young Willman as guardian of them.

A couple of rough shanties were hastily constructed, not far apart, on the lake shore and rudely furnished. Here the women and boy have been since spring and here they will remain until late in the fall.



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Dr. Sandberg went by railroad to Grand Rapids and overland from Grand Rapids to the lake. Here he found an old hermit who, until the advent of the Minneapolis people, was the only human being within a radius of 10 miles. At the hermit's house he by accident met young Willman, who promptly took him across the lake to his mother's cabin. The doctor's surprise was complete when he saw the ladies and heard their story.

The Indians from Leech Lake reservation spend a portion of each summer on the shore of Lake Pokegama, hunting and fishing. All the country round the lake formerly belonged to them, but was bought by the government. The Indians, in reality, have no right at the lake, but as they had always been peaceable and quiet and there were no white people for them to annoy, they were tolerated by the authorities. Messrs. Willman and Thomas, it seems, remained at the lake several weeks, building and furnishing the cabins and laying in provisions. The Indians were camped only a short distance from the shanties and as long as the men were on the ground, were as friendly and agreeable as could be desired. The night following the departure of the men for Minneapolis, however, the Indians inaugurated a ghost dance and all got gloriously drunk. In a frenzied state they visited the two cabins, flourishing and recklessly discharging firearms, and notified the lone women to leave within three days or be killed. All night they kept up their orgies near the house, and their loud cries effectually drove sleep from the squatter's eyes.

In the darkness the son put off in a boat and made his way first to the hermit's house and then to Grand Rapids, where he told his story. The sheriff, a half breed, collected a posse of citizens and went to the cabins. Where they remained for almost a week, on guard night and day with Winchester rifles. The Indians in the meantime had become sober, and the sight of the armed men called them to their senses. They humbly admitted their fault, pitifully begged forgiveness and faithfully promised in the future to behave themselves and not molest Mrs. Willman and Mrs. Thomas. With this understanding that they were permitted to remain and not ordered back to the reservation.

The Indians had a final ghost dance the night the sheriff and his men arrived, before they knew of their arrival. During the melee several of the braves and squaws were seriously cut about the face and body with hunting knives. The medicine men did not presume to bind up the wounds given in a ghost dance, and so the Willman boy, aided by the citizens of Grand Rapids, enacted the role of surgeon most successfully.

Dr. Sandberg remained as the guest of the two Minneapolis ladies during his two week's stay and on his return was the first one to bring news of their adventures to Minneapolis. Their husbands, as may be imagined were horror-stricken and prepared to leave for Lake Pokegama at once. The doctor, however, assured them that all danger was past, and they will defer their trip for several weeks.

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The feelings of the two women during the Indian uprising can be better imagined than described.

The land that has been claimed by the Messrs. Willman and Thomas is heavily stocked with first-class pine, which will readily sell for from \$5,000 to \$8,000. A young man named Lawrence, living just above Dr. Sandberg's store on 5th St. N. E., near Central avenue and across the street from Willman's, was recently offered \$5,000 for some land he had claimed on this lake.

The women now think the danger is over and are resolved to stay until the six months are up, having stayed this long. When they went to the lake both were in poor health and the 'roughing it' has worked wonders for their health, much to the joy of all the members of both families."

Note

Mr. Sumner:-

This will be all of the special items asked for both as the column and the article en toto.

Hause



Grand Rapids Notes  
Nov. 20, 1940

of chocolate went into the woods. These were before the days of fresh fruit and modern cans and packages. Everything was in bulk and came and went in cases and barrels.

Henry Ranfranz left John Beckfelt to work for William O'Donnell, another well known merchant of the early days. After a year or <sup>so</sup> he was married and in about 1912, started together with the late William King and Fred Breid, a clothing store at Cohasset. That community was active then but within a short time Mr. Ranfranz was back at Grand Rapids where he has been ever <sup>since</sup> time."

Dec 27-02

Itasca County Independent  
Sat. Dec. 27, 1902 Vol. 1-9  
P. 1. col. 2-3

"Grand Rapids' Greatest Industry.

For many years the great water power at our door went undeveloped, and the rushing waters that should have been turning the wheels of industry, raced past on their way to the Gulf of Mexico with never a turbine, dam or water-wheel to hinder. But along in 1897 during the incumbency of H. D. Powers in the mayor's office, the business men began to think over the wilful waste of such splendid material, and Mr. Powers, who had experience in the line of water power development at Brainerd, did some earnest missionary work in the good cause which bore abundant fruit later on. The matter was discussed pro and con from that time on, but nothing definite was done till the council appointed a company of citizens to try to induce some manufacturing company to locate here.

This committee was composed of the following named gentlemen; D. M. Gunn, John Beckfelt, L. F. Knox, D. W. Doran, George F. Meyers, John Costello and H. D. Powers, afterwards organized the Grand Rapids

yes

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Water Power and Boom Co. and obtained a state charter in 1899. The officers of the new company were; D. M. Gunn, president; John Beckfelt, vice president; L. F. Knox, treasurer; H. D. Powers, secretary.

Having obtained a charter from the state, the next step was to get a bill through congress giving them the right to construct a dam across the Mississippi, and in that matter Hon. D. M. Gunn did yeoman service; making a trip to Washington and devoting his sole attention to the work till it was crowned with success. Their bill through congress and the sanction of the national government thus obtained, the company proceeded to obtain a survey of the flowage of the proposed dam, and instituted condemnation proceedings, of which the village bore the expense - and never in it's corporate life did Grand Rapids invest money so wisely and so well. All things being now in readiness, the company began negotiations with the manufacturing concerns, the representatives of several of which came here to look the prospect over; and finally came into communication with the gentlemen who are operating the great paper mill here today. Ere long the Itasca Paper Company of Grand Rapids, Minn., came into being; and work on the dam and great mill was in progress. To be exact work commenced in November, 1900 and continued without intermission till it was completed, and the first sheet of finished paper came off the rollers in February, 1902. The plans for the whole work were drawn by Mr. J. C. Jacobson, of Grand Rapids, Wisconsin, a gentleman without a superior as an architect in the northwest, the work of construction was all done under his supervision and stands today a splendid testimonial to his perfect mastery of his profession.

The mill itself is a massive structure of brick, stone and iron



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mainly, wood being used as sparingly as possible, and it is as near fire-proof as mortal ingenuity can devise. To give an idea of its' dimensions we will state that the great paper room, which holds the mammoth paper machine, going through which converts the pulp into the finished paper, is 208 ft x 70 ft., and even that great space is but a part of the gigantic whole. The beater room is 96x96; the wood room is 72x16, and other rooms in proportion. This great industrial institution is under the most skillful guidance, the foreman of each department being a master of his craft and a man of long experience, and tried and proven worth. At the head and in control of the whole mill, is Mr. Charles G. Oberly, a gentleman whose life has been spent in the paper manufacturing business, who has learned every process in it by actual experience and who ranks as one of the very best men in the trade. Mr. Oberley superintended the setting up of the whole of the machinery now in use in the mill, and that he did his work thoroughly is proved by the fact that it has run almost every day - and 24 hours is a paper mill day - since the mill started up without a single serious break.

The mill yard and all outside work is under the charge of Mr. Fred Lindaner, and if constant hustling will keep things going they will never stop in this department. In the wood room, which is in charge of Mr. Peter Van Stephout, there are a circular saw and five C. A. Lawton Co. barking machines, made at De Pere, Wis., and capable of barking and cutting into proper lengths ready for the grinding machines, 25 cords of wood per day of ten hours. Mr. Van Stephout holds a record of never failing to keep the grinders going while there

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was wood in reach, and is as fine a judge of wood for pulp as the business ever developed.

The grinding room where the wood is made into pulp by hydraulic pressure, is under the charge of Mr. Max Alpine, an old hand at the paper trade and famous as an expert in his line, is equipped with six grinders of the new American pattern made by the Globe Iron Works of Dayton O. and has a grinding capacity of 25 tons of wood pulp in 24 hours.

The three beater machines are in charge of Messrs. Anthony Zenninger and Charles Bent, both of whom understand their business thoroughly, and alternate day and night in charge of the beater room. The great paper machine, a wonderful 120 inch combination of wheels, cogs and the like, so complex that a layman can scarce describe it, but working with such precision as to seem almost endowed with thought, is under the joint charge of Messrs. Louis Jorgenson and Thomas Grignon; one of whom is in charge of it and command of its crew during each 12 hours of the day. Mr. Jorgenson, perhaps as well known to our good people by his title of 'Old Reliable' earned as first base of the local nine; is just as reliable in the mill as on the ball ground, and the grade of paper that he and Mr. Grignon, who matches him in all respects, turn out will equal the product of any mill in the United States.

The dam which stores and holds the water that drives the mill machinery, with the exception of the paper machine which is driven by steam; is a most substantial structure; was built under the sole direction of Mr. Luther Lindaner and built to resist any flood the Father of Waters is ever likely to roll down upon it. The power is conveyed through 31 turbines and has as yet been equal to all demands upon it. In addition



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to the water power, the company has a superbly built and equipped steam plant which runs the paper machine and heats the whole mill. The steam is generated in three tubular boilers 72x16 in dimensions, made by E. R. Gustavus of Oshkosh Wis., and furnishes motive power to a splendid Corliss engine, 22x48 built by the Twin City Iron Works of Minneapolis. The engineer in chief of the the steam plant is Mr. Robert Grignon, a machinist and engineer of long experience and unquestioned ability; and Messrs. George Ulrey and Marcus Wilkes alternate in direct charge of the great engine.

Mr. Thomas Kells is millwright and superintendent of construction in all the companys building operations, and is now engaged in supervising the building of a shingle mill which the company proposes to run next season. Mr. Kells is an artist at his trade, as every interviewer of his handiwork will be swift to admit.

In addition to all its other equipments, the company has a machine shop of its own and can repair any breakage that does not require absolutely new castings. This shop, which is furnished with the most modern iron working machinery, is in the capable hands of Mr. Robert Grignon, chief engineer and machinist of the mill. and what Bob can't make or repair, can't be made or repaired outside of an iron foundry.

The company has its own electric lighting plant, with 300 incandescent and six arc lights, and therefore suffered none from the recent light famine. The mill as it stands today, including the dam, represents an expenditure of about \$300,000 dollars in cash, a very large proportion of which was spent in Grand Rapids for labor. The plans of the Paper Company contemplate an addition to the building at an early date and the addition of another paper machine to the capacity, which will bring the

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cost of the plant well up to half a million of dollars. The company employs from 100 to 125 men and girls and has a monthly pay-roll of from \$5,000 to \$6,000. It furnishes a cash market for all the spruce, balsam and poplar suitable for grinding that our farmers can haul and all in all, is the greatest blessing we of Grand Rapids have to be thankful for. The company of which the official title is the Itasca Paper company is composed of the following gentlemen:

Frank F. Becker	President
Luther Lindaner	Vice President
H. G. Becker	Secretary
A. C. Bossard	Treasurer and Manager.

Messrs. F. F. Becker and Luther Lindaner are residents of Kaukanna, Wisc., while Messrs. Bossard and H. G. Becker reside here. The books of the company are in the charge of H. G. Becker; while Miss Mamie Bossard, daughter of the company's manager, is the stenographer of the concern. We are glad to record that under its able management, the first year of the mill's existence has been a most prosperous one, and the greatest difficulty, or rather difficulties, the company has had to contend with have been occasional lack of sufficient wood to grind and cars in which to ship paper out."

Sat. May 16, 1903 Vol. 1-29  
P. 1. col. 4.

"When the world was created Grand Rapids was furnished with a pretty a town site as lies out of doors anywhere. And when the first town builders came along they had eyes for beauty and acted according. Our little city is laid out beautifully. Our streets are wide and the noble standing pine on every one of them give the town a beauty that is



May 16-03

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unexcelled by any town in Minnesota, and equalled by very few. The three lovely lakes on the outskirts of the town, and the country between them afford a magnificent natural park needing but scant expenditure to make it a 'thing of beauty for ever.' Most of our residence buildings come up to the natural beauty of their surroundings. Our public buildings are as handsome and commodious as can be found in most cities, and taking things altogether we have one of the most beautiful little cities in the State, of which we ought to be proud and doubtless are. And we also have the ugliest, dingiest city hall in seventeen states, of which we are not proud to any great extent. Just why the council does not renovate that grievous old eye-sore, we cannot tell - and wish it would."

Sat. Apr. 8, 1905 Vol. III - 24  
P. 4. Col. 2.

Apr 8-05

"Grand Rapids is one of the prettiest, cleanest appearing towns in the northern part of the state. That does not mean that the appearance of the town is particularly clean, but that in comparison with the other villages of this section, it compares very favorably. Still, on a closer inspection, we notice that there are innumerable places where the owners either haven't had time or have not thot /sic/ of removing the offensive appearance of the refuse that naturally accumulates in a winter. We'd like to see all who read this accept the friendly suggestion, and do a stunt with the rake, fork and wheelbarrow. It will make your premises and your particular part of town present a natty appearance and reflect credit upon yourself and your town, to say nothing of the increase in value that it will make on your property. Clean up your yards."

Itasca County Independent  
Sat. Jan. 20, 1906.  
p. 5. Col. 3. Vol. IV - 13

Jan 20 06

"To Move Circulating Library - Grand Rapids' Carnegie Library is about completed now requiring only the installation of the fixtures and the new books to make it ready for the public. We are informed that the fixtures and the books will not arrive before the first part of next month, and that it will not be before the 12 th of 15th that the librarian and board will have the fixtures in and the books properly catalogued so that the building can be thrown open to the public. Secretary Dickinson, however, informs the writer that the circulating library, and the books which the library association have of their own will be removed from the library room of the central school where they have been kept up to the present time, to the new library building where Mrs. Huntly will hold forth on Saturdays as heretofore for the accommodation of the patrons of this branch of the library until the new building is formally occupied.

The library board has been planning on opening the new library with appropriate ceremonies, but as yet it has not been decided what will be done in regard to the matter."

p. 4. Col. 2.  
Sat. May 25, 1907.

May 25-07

"While our town has bonded itself to raise money with which to build roads, it would be well for our farmers to remember that there are other ways of getting a good road than by getting it from the town. And the best way is to use the implement commonly known as the 'split-log drag' on the roads in the neighborhood of one's place of residence. We understand that the township of Grand Rapids is soon to put a team on the



p. 4. Col. 2.  
Sat. May 25, 1907

May 25-07

- 11 -

roads of the township with a drag to keep the roads in good condition. A most commendable move and co-operation of the farmers would help a whole lot."

Itasca County Independent  
Sat. July 20, 1907 - Vol. V -39  
P. 1. col. 3 & 4.

July 20-07  
Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause  
Nov. 27, 1940.

"Ben Levy, reliable merchant, looks back at six years of business here with pride.

It is just six years since Ben Levy started in business in Grand Rapids in a little store on Leland avenue, with a small stock of goods. Since that day his business has marched forward in the line of progress until it is one of the flourishing business institutions of the city. Mr. Levy's first place of business was in the McDonald building on Leland Ave., where he carried but a small stock of goods. About a year later he moved into the Oddfellow block where he conducted his store ably assisted by his sons Charles and Abe. In 1904 he bought out the Perrault store in the building which his store now occupies in order to obtain a better location, and opened another store conducting both stores until about two and half years ago, when he discontinued doing business in the Oddfellow block. While he was closing out his stock in that place, he was having his present quarters enlarged and remodeled to accommodate a larger and better stock with his combined capital.

A short time ago, Mr. Levy decided again to branch out, and secured a building in Coleraine where he is about to open an exclusive clothing and men's furnishing store, which will be in charge of his son, Abe Levy, who has shown exceptional ability <sup>along</sup> business lines. Mr. Levy senior is now in the eastern markets buying goods for both stores.

During all the time that Mr. Levy has been in business here, his dealings have always been marked by a spirit of progressiveness and up-to-dateness which insured success. He has always been a consistent and judicious advertiser, which may be attributed ~~to~~ a large share of his success."



Aug 10-07

Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause

Itasca County Independent  
Sat. Aug. 10, 1907 - Vol. V - 42  
P. 1. col. 3 & 4

#### IMPROVEMENTS

Much Improvement Work Being Done.

in the Village

Appearance of Town

Greatly Improved

Considerable Private As Well As Public Work

is being done.

While the activity along building and improvement lines in Grand Rapids is not as pronounced as it might be, still there is much more being done than the general public dreams of. One of the main features of the improvement is the extensive building of cement sidewalks all over the village. Most of this work is being done by the village and the cost of the same will later be assessed to the property owners fronting whose property the walks are being built. Others, however, are having the work done themselves. Among the walks which have already been built are the walks on the two street sides of the Pokegama hotel and other stretches in the same block, then on the east side of Leland avenue from the Pokegama hotel corner across the tracks past the Itasca Mercantile store to the corner at the Village hall; on the west side of Leland Avenue from the Fountain house corner north to sixth street the work is now in progress in the west end of the city from Root's livery and will extend west to Duluth avenue whence it will follow that avenue to the vicinity of the new school building as well as walks on the north side of Leland avenue across the railroad tracks to Fourth street and on Eighth street between Sleeper and Leland avenues, besides in numerous other parts of the Village.

The work of filling in the ravine on Third street between the court-house and the main part of the village goes on apace. Not only are the

Sat. Aug. 10, 1907  
P. 1. col. 3 & 4

Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause

contractors, Bowder & Mc Veigh making a good showing at the fill, but the streets from which they are taking the dirt are coming down to grade at a great rate. Chas. Brock has a contract for excavating of the basement under the Lent building, and has been hauling the dirt from there to the grounds of the new ward school in the west part of town, which grounds are being graded up. The excavation for the new brick block which M. Ponti is soon to put up on the site of the old O'Reilly blacksmith shop is coming along nicely, the dirt from this also going to the new school grounds.

The village has been making many improvements in the way extension of water mains, sewer and electric light lines.

All of these improvements will greatly add to the appearance of the village, particularly the walks across the railroad tracks which will take the place of the dirty cinder paths which the walks replace. Everywhere the walks are put on grade. While the putting of the walks on a new grade will make the town look much better, it will also work some disadvantage to many of those who had buildings, which were put up before the grade was established, and who are left in many instances away up in the air. Among these are the Itasca Mercantile company's store building the Independent building and the village hall. The same might be said of the lowering of the grade on Third street where John Heppel, Dibbert, and others will be left 'way up in the air.'

Beside this village work, there are a good many dwellings and other buildings going up, notably an addition to the Presbyterian church and the new residence of John McVeigh.

C. M. Erskine is building a considerable addition to his home, the old Faulkinghor residence which Mr. Erskine purchased some time ago.

John W. Aiton is putting the finishing touches on his pretty new



Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause

Sat. Aug. 10, 1907  
P. 1. Col. 3 & 4

residence on Leland avenue.

John Rellis is soon to build a stone foundation and basement under his place of business.

Doran Bros., of the Gladstone Hotel, will soon start the remodeling of their popular hostelry. Among other things they will install a modern heating plant, put in a basement and paint the exterior of the building, all of which will greatly enhance the comfort and appearance of the hotel.

The stone work under the Bank Saloon has just been completed, and the large basement under the Lent Building is in the process of construction."

Mar 4-09

Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause  
Nov. 27, 1940

Itasca County Independent  
Thurs. Mar. 4, 1909 Vol. VII - 20  
P. 1. col. 4

"POKEGAMA LUMBER

COMPANY

New Corporation Which Will Handle Building

Material in Grand Rapids.

Will Absorb The City

Lumber Yard.

A. W. Sitz, Popular Local Young Man Will Be

Resident Manager

This week the Pokegama Lumber company was organized and incorporated to a wholesale and retail lumber business in Grand Rapids. The incorporators are D. M. Gumm, president, E. A. Kremer, Vice-president, L. Schaf, treasurer, A. W. Sitz, secretary, and the company is incorporated for \$50,000. A. W. Sitz, who has been a resident of Grand Rapids for several years, and who is one of Grand Rapids' most popular young men will be the local manager.

Mr. Leonard Schaf, who formerly owned the City Lumber Yard has been here all this week getting the new company organized and assisting Mr. Sitz in getting started.

The new company is a strong one, with plenty of resources and backed by men of excellent financial, and should prove a success.

Later - Late yesterday, since the foregoing was written, the incorporators received word that they could not use the name 'Pokegama Lumber Company,' as another company has already been incorporated under that name in the state. The incorporators therefore, have decided to incorporate under the name of the 'City Lumber Company,'



Apr. 8-09

Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause  
Nov. 27, 1940

Itasca County Independent  
Thurs. April 8, 1909 Vol. VII - 25  
P. 1. col. 1.

"POPULATION TO DOUBLE IN  
TWO YEARS

Reports Current That Much Prosperity Is In  
Store For Grand Rapids

Coming of Railroad to be  
Great Help

Reports Say Shops And Division of G. N.  
Will Be Located Here.

The extension of the Great Northern to Grand Rapids from the range will mark the beginning of a very important epoch in the history of the prosperity of Grand Rapids, according to reports of a very authentic nature which are wafted about.

The work on the extension is being pushed vigorously, and the reports that trains will be running over it by July 1, are not far fetched or exaggerated in the least.

The service which is outlined when the road gets to running is not yet clearly defined, but it will include night sleeper service from Duluth to this point, and thence onto the range, and vice versa, with day service to match, giving range people most desirable service.

Nor is this all, according to the source of our information, which comes from one who knows, the line south to Millaca, regarding which this paper made mention some time ago, is no idle dream. Before long the work on such a line will be commenced. The idea, primarily, is to tap the Aitkin country and the Cayuma range, with the territory incidently tapped, and secondarily to give the range and this section direct service with the twin cities.

Grand Rapids Notes  
G. Hause

Thurs. Apr. 8, 1909 Vol. VIII  
P. 1. Col. 1.

That Grand Rapids will within two years double in population is not a wild prediction. The culmination of this railroad building will be the establishment at this point of division headquarters and car shops which would bring many people to our city. Beside this, many traveling men will make this their headquarters, wholesale houses will locate here, and the possibilities of the town from mining properties are not to be scoffed at. The possibilities of Grand Rapids as an industrial center are the brightest."

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DEC 6-19

Grand Rapids Notes  
H. H. Hause  
December 13, 1940

Itasca County Independent  
December 6, 1919  
P. 1, col. 1

"PIONEER WOMAN DIES

Mrs. Duncan McKinnon, Old Resident of Grand Rapids,  
Answers Last Summons.

Mrs. Duncan McKinnon died Sunday, November 30, at the home of her son James, at Taconite. Mrs. McKinnon had been in failing health for seven days prior to her death suffering from an attack of bronchial pneumonia. This well known and kind hearted old lady had lived to the ripe old age of 78. She was born at St. John's, Nova Scotia, but as a young girl went with her parents to Lochiel, Ont., to reside. In 1867 she was married to Duncan McKinnon and moved to the state of Michigan forty years ago. Mrs. McKinnon came to Grand Rapids in 1896 and resided here until 1907, when she went to Taconite and made her home with her son, James, until the time of her death. Seven children survive the deceased, three daughters and four sons. The daughters are Mrs. John Sheehy, Cass Lake; Mrs. John Calnanie, Willyard, Wash., and Mrs. Hugh McNulty, Taconite. The sons are Joseph of Grand Rapids, James and Dan of Taconite and John of Winnipeg, Man.

Funeral services were conducted yesterday morning from St. Joseph's Catholic church here and burial was made in Itasca cemetery."

Mar 6-20

Grand Rapids Notes  
H. H. Hause  
December 17, 1940

Itasca County Independent  
March 6, 1920  
P. 1, col. 2

"PIONEER PASSES AWAY  
J. P. O'Donnell, For Many Years A  
Resident Here, Goes To Great Beyond.

J. P. O'Donnell died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. T. R. Pravitz, at 1:30 P.M. last Saturday. Mr. O'Donnell had been ill about four weeks, his death being the natural result of old age, as he had lived to the ripe old age of 88 years and 7 months.

Mr. O'Donnell had been a resident of Grand Rapids since 1892, coming to this point from his former home, Hammond, Wis., and being at the time of death the oldest member of the Minnesota Territorial Pioneer association. Mr. O'Donnell saw Grand Rapids grow from a little hamlet to the pretty village that it now is and took an active interest in all things pertaining to the advancement of the welfare of the community as long as he was able to be up and around. For the past several years he has been kept at home most of the time because of his advancing years.

Mr. O'Donnell is survived by three sons and one daughter, his wife having preceeded him to the grave twenty-three years ago. The boys are C. J. O'Donnell, who is living in New Mexico; Charles P. O'Donnell, of Duluth and W. B. O'Donnell of St. Paul; the one daughter, Mrs. T. R. Pravitz, of Grand Rapids.

The remains were sent on Monday to Hammond, Wis., where Mrs. O'Donnell is buried, and where accompanied from this point by Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. O'Donnell of Duluth and Mrs. Pravitz. W. B. O'Donnell had gone previously to Hammond to make the funeral and burial arrangements.

The condolence of the community, as well as this publication, is extended to those bereaved by Mr. O'Donnell's death."



Grand Rapids Notes  
H. H. Hause  
December 13, 1940

Itasca County Independent  
December 11, 1920

Dec 11-20

"ON SAME JOB 20 YEARS  
Theodore Heckel Has Seen Every Step Of The  
Mill Of Itasca Paper Co.

Theodore Heckel, teamster for the Itasca Paper Company, has been on the job twenty years, last week seeing the end of the twentieth year of his service with the same concern which he has served faithfully during all this time.

Mr. Heckel came to Grand Rapids from Wisconsin, and he drove the team that broke the first ground for the construction of the paper mill. He saw the plant grow from nothing into the fine institution it is today, and next to the one ambition, his best efforts were directed to serving the company that employed him. His first concern, however, was always to have the finest and best kept team in this vicinity, and in this he always succeeded admirably, his team being always much the handsomest in Grand Rapids. He has in his 20 years had but four teams. One was sold after doing long service, one was drowned a few years ago while driving piling on the river above the mill, two horses died from natural cause, and the last team is the pretty blacks which he is now driving."

WD

Jan 29-14

Itasca Co.  
Independent

Vol. XIII - 15

Thursday  
1-29-14

"DISCUSSED NEEDS OF TOWN

Talk Over What Can be Done For Town

Report of Officers Showed Many Activities During the Past Year

At the annual get together banquet of the Grand Rapids Town and Country Booster Club held at the high school building last Friday evening, the reports of officers of the club were listened to, numerous talks given and suggestions made by citizens, officers elected, a splendid banquet partaken of, and a very nice social time enjoyed.

The report of Secretary Peterson showed that, while there are some chronic kickers who are always ready to say that the Booster club has not been doing anything, the club has really to be credited with very many creditable activities, many of which bore good fruits, while others are yet in process of obtaining results. Still other activities were directed toward the endorsement of worthy movements which would otherwise not have been recognized by Grand Rapids and gone without the influence of Grand Rapids. All in all, the Booster club during the past year did much to keep Grand Rapids on the map and before the public eye as a live town, which in itself is a considerable item.

Miss Burlingame made a plea for the support of the rest room by the business people, and cited a number of things which are needed for the rest room and suggested that the merchants and other business people of Grand Rapids through the Booster club or otherwise, provide these things and perpetuate the good work which the farm women started in establishing the rest room.

J. D. Doran spoke briefly on various subjects, touching upon, among other things, the matter of the bad habit of cutting across and ruining the lawns which the school and library boards spend good



cash money to maintain, and deplored the lack of civic pride on the part of the people regarding these matters.

Fred Carson of the high school faculty, touched a very popular chord in his talk when he suggested that as soon as the new gymnasium in the addition to the high school is furnished, the place be opened to the boys in the village under the direction of an athletic director, and there teach them to develop their bodies and inspire them to cleanliness and clean living. The district said Mr. Carson, is making every provision to develop the minds of its young people, and it is only right that means should be provided to develop the bodies of the boys and girls in such a manner that they will be fit abodes for the brains which the district is spending much to develop.

H. G. Becker touched a point which should be born in mind by every resident of Grand Rapids. He referred to the fact that too many Grand Rapids people carry the idea that the officers of the Booster club, or others active in doing work for the public good, are boosters for self glorification. While there may be a little of this sentiment on the part of the Boosters, (and it is a poor stick of a man who could not feel a little pride in his own work), the fact remains that nearly all men who spend their time, and often their money in boosting "do it for the good of the cause," and even if there is personal dislike for the men in the movement, the rank and file should get behind the movement, for after all, the boosters are not only those in the lead of such a movement, but include all, and any man who knocks the boosters is knocking himself.

Supt. Freeman endorsed the sentiments expressed by Mr. Carson, and went further and made an appeal for the co-operation of the parents in

Jan 29-15

seeing that the laws as they relate to juveniles be better enforced.

A. M. Sisler was called upon, and he told of his activity in trying to get a shed built at the rest rooms for stabling the farmers' horses, and he suggested that the Booster club get behind the movement and provide such a shed. Mr. Sisler stated that such a place would do more to encourage the use of the rest room than anything else which could be done. Upon his suggestion a committee was appointed to look after the matter, and Mr. Stone named James Passard, J. D. Doran, and L. W. Huntly as members of that committee."

Saturday  
1-23-1915

Jan 23-15

Itasca County Independent

P. 1, Col. 2.

"OLD LANDMARK GOES - An old landmark is being moved this week.

C. H. Carlson this week purchased the old warehouse of the late Itasca Mercantile Co., on the west side of Leland Avenue, north of the tracks, and he is moving it to his lots in the west end of town where he will use it as a cement block factory building. The warehouse was built by the Itasca Mercantile Co. about eighteen years ago. It is far from an imposing structure, and its removal will greatly improve the looks of the place where it stood. This is one of the few warehouses which were erected along the track in the old logging days left on the track."



P.1, Col. 3

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"BEAUTIFY THIRD STREET

Woman's Club Doing Laudable Work On Down Town Thorofare /sic/

The civic department of the Woman's Club of Grand Rapids on Monday of this week began activities toward the beautifying of Third street. Eight mountain ash trees were set out by W. D. Perrington, which will add to the attractiveness of the boulevard. These trees are particularly pretty when in leaf and will furnish good shade. It is anticipated that a hedge of highland spruce will be built for three blocks along the north side of the boulevard and three large flower beds made containing red, white and blue flowers. Mrs. T. R. Pravitz is chairman of the civic committee and has a committee assisting her in this plausible work, consisting of Mrs. R. A. Stone, Miss Florence Burlingame, Mrs. A. A. Campbell, Mrs. Ed. Kelm, and Mrs. H. C. Lawrence, The proceeds of the musical entertainment given under the direction of Mrs. Lawrence and Mrs. Harrison are being used to finance the proposition and the work when completed will greatly improve the appearance of this popular thoroughfare. The village owes a note of sincere thanks to these public spirited women for what they are accomplishing along this and other lines for a better Grand Rapids."

Sep 8-17 Vol. XVI - 48

"Death of Henry Tinkey, Itasca County Pioneer

The remains of Henry Tinkey were brought here from Delhi, Iowa, Thursday for interment in the Old Soldiers' cemetery. Mr. Tinkey was a man who had reached the ripe old age of 74 and died from the effects of a paralytic stroke. Some 15 years ago Mr. Tinkey, who had been a resident of Grand Rapids for some time, removed his residence to Bear

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River, where he resided until recently, when he went for a visit to the house of one of his daughters at Delhi, where he had been two months when he died. The deceased was the father of eight children who survive him. His wife died some years ago and is buried here in the Old Soldiers' cemetery and it was on this account that Mr. Tinkey's remains were brought here for burial that he might be laid to rest beside his wife. Mr. Tinkey was a loving father and a good friend and neighbor and held in high esteem by all who knew him. The independent extends sympathy to the bereaved ones."

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TO ADVERTISE ITASCA COUNTY LAKES

Grand Rapids Commercial Club Starts Publicity Campaign to Bring Tourists Here  
Will Get Out 20,000 Map Folders

Unequalled Lake and Summer Resort Facilities and Good Roads Will bring Tourists

At a meeting of the Grand Rapids Commercial Club Thursday evening, the matter of getting out a map and folder to connect Itasca county with the benefits of the advertising being done by the Ten Thousand Lakes of Minnesota Association, and to advertise the 9,000 lakes of Itasca county, it was decided to proceed with the work of getting out 20,000 folder maps with a map on the front and illustrations of hunting, fishing and other scenes on the back.

The funds with which to pay for this work, which will amount to about \$1,200, were pledged to a committee consisting of E. N. Remer, E. A. Kermer and C. K. Andrews during the few days previous to the meeting. The gentlemen met with a remarkable response, and raised the required amount, and more without any trouble.



May 3-19  
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It is the plan of the club to send the maps, along with such publicity matter as may be gotten out, to the prospective tourists who will reply to the advertisements for the Ten Thousands Lakes Association, a list of which is furnished each week to the various commercial clubs, resort owners and others interested in the promotion of the lake and summer tourist business in this section of the state.

The unequalled fishing, laking and other summer resort facilities and excellent roads of this section, coupled with the publicity campaign planned, should bring thousands of visitors to Itasca county every year."

Feb 23-24

P. 1 - Col. 3  
Itasca County Independent  
Feb. 23, 1924 - Vol. XXII-20

History of Grand Rapids  
Rec'd Dec. 18, 1940  
By: E. A. Sumner

"EVER HEARD OF THE POKEGAMA BEAR?"  
-----

M. McAlpine Tells Interesting Bit of  
Early History Inspired by Capture of  
Bear.  
-----

Reminiscences of the Early Days.  
-----

Only Five Men Left of the Residents of This  
Section in the Year 1874.  
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Have you ever heard of the Pokegama bear? The Pokegama bear is a character intimately interwoven in the earliest history of Itasca county, and the incident of his capture is a true tale which was written into verse by Frank Hasty, one time lumberjack and later a cruiser for lumber companies throughout this section. Mr. Hasty died in Minneapolis last year. The story of the Pokegama bear was recited to the writer by Mike McAlpine whom we heard one day singing to himself some verses which, when we asked him what the verses were, said it was the story of the Pokegama Bear.

It seems that in the fall of 1874, Mr. McAlpine had come up from Minneapolis to work in the woods for F. P. Clark, then one of the prominent loggers in this section. Clark had a number of camps and much timber, as did all the loggers who logged here in those days, and Mr. McAlpine and the crew to which he was assigned were in camp at the head of Pokegama lake on what was then Knowlton's arm, now known as Black's arm, the camp being on the south side of the lake just north of what is now Chris Erickson's fine dairy farm.



The lumberjacks in those days were almost all Mainites. Those who weren't were Scotchmen from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and a few hard Irishmen and Yankees who had found their way into the north woods, and many of whom later became the pioneers of this section. The foreman of the camp in which Mr. McAlpine worked was a man named John Hanson, a native of Nova Scotia, and a hard man among hard customers. The name Hanson suggests the Scandinavian, but Mr. McAlpine says that there were no Scandinavians introduced into this country until some years later. He says he remembers when the first Swedes came to this section to work in the woods - he remembers it by a peculiar incident which occurred when he visited a camp in which some of the men were working. He had been 'farming' for his bosses through one summer at the head of Big Trout lake, and he went to this camp for something or other. His dog, accustomed to hearing Chippewa and English spoken and to the ways and voices and intonations of the woodsmen and Indians it was accustomed to being with, had stood with bristling hair and come running to heel and growling after hearing a party of Scandinavians talking among themselves - a thing not at all unusual with dogs when they hear or experience some new or unusual phenomena.

But to come back to the Pokegama bear, one Marris O'Hearn who was loading the teams had gotten through loading the four teams that were hauling to the lake probably a quarter or a half a mile away and had a little time on his hands, and, as it was colder than, well, pretty doggone cold, he decided to build a fire. He went to a hollow pine stub to get kindling, and when he commenced chopping into the stub, the bear jumped out and made for the timber, and it was hard to tell which was more scared - O'Hearn or the bear. Hasty and a man named Quinn gave chase, but before they could overtake Bruin, Mr. McAlpine, who was in the chopping not far from the road, saw the bear coming and hiding behind a tree alongside of the road (the bear

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had by that time taken to the road where the running was easier than through the deep snow) knocked Bruin in the head with his axe and killed him. (It is interesting to note that in those days they chopped with 'pole axes' instead of the double-bitted axes of today.) The oil of the bear those days it seems, was prized more highly than the skin or the meat, and the bear was taken to camp and the oil fried out on a Sunday morning. That day McAlpine and Hasty had gone out to look up axe handle timber, and they were gone longer than they intended, and when they got back to camp, the grease had all been tried out and lo, they had lost their share of the oil, it having all been claimed by those who had bottles ready to help themselves as it came from the kettles.

Before submitting Mrs. Hasty's verses on the Pokegama bear, which will be appended hereto, it is interesting to note some of the memories of Mr. McAlpine of those days long ago. South of Pokegama lake, which is now a hardwood country with comparatively little pine, there was scarcely any hardwood and the only timber was pine - mostly white pine. The same is true of the territory all around Pokegama lake, and all through this section. The pine was beautiful stuff, three logs to a load and 1,600 feet or more in every log. Those days they hauled largely with oxen, though some camps had horses. The old Mainites, however, would have nothing but the oxen - four and six to a team - a road full of horns, the Mainites would say, 'and we'll haulin on 'em out.'

All the lumbering centered in Minneapolis. The men, supplies, etc., would come up to Aitken on the N.P. railroad which had ventured that far north, and from there by steamboat up the Mississippi river. Grand Rapids did exist then. That is, there was hardly a settlement here at that time. A little birchbark cabin east of the place where Roy Wheaton's log dwelling house now stands housed a small 'store' conducted by Jo Gould. 'Lo' Seavey, later quite prominently identified with the history of the river, and about



the same time, Warren Potter, of Aitken, who died a few years ago, conducted a store in which he afterward took in as his partner Pat Casey, who came up to work for him in 1878. The firm of Potter and Casey was for a long time prominent in this section and existed until recently at Aitkin.

Even in those days the fertility of the soil was recognized, and while none of the people here at that time dreamed of ever seeing this a farming country or of its ever being a farming section, all of the loggers kept a man or two at the 'headquarters ranch' to 'watch camp,' take care of the <sup>open</sup> open, and do a little farming - raise potatoes, bagas, cabbage, carrots and other vegetables for the next winter's logging, and to look after making hay on the extensive meadows which lined the Mississippi at intervals, the haying crew coming up about the first of August. Following the winter of 1874-75, Mr. McAlpine remained in this section for F. P. Clark to look after their farming, etc. Mr. McAlpine says that it was during that summer, while boating hay down the Mississippi into Pokegama lake that he first met Walt Leeman. Mr. Leeman was cooking for Tidd & Fayal at their river camps upon White Oak Point. Mr. McAlpine says that he can testify that Mr. Leeman was in that section at that time and has been here since, and he doesn't know how long before.

In the conduct of these farming occupations the crudest kind of implements were used, and Mr. McAlpine says that the first plow and the first wagon brought into this section were brought in by E. P. Clark about the time he first came here.

Among the loggers who logged in this section are many firms now no longer remembered. Mr. McAlpine remembers the names of the firms that conducted hundreds of camps all through this section on waters flowing into the Mississippi. One logging firm that left a work that still remains is the firm of Smith & Mackey who logged on Sugar lake. They landed many thousands of feet of logs on Sugar lake planning to float them down the

creek between Sugar lake and Pokegama lake. Because they could not get enough of a headwater to float the logs, the winter's cut was abandoned in the brook, and the logs are there to this day, many of them in such a state of preservation that not long ago it was planned to salvage them and have them cut into timber.

The population of what is now Itasca county - at that time practically the whole of northeastern Minnesota was really a part of Crow Wing county - was very sparse in summer. Not over 25 men - there were no white women - lived here the year around. These were engaged in watching camp and farming for the loggers. Among them were Walt Leeman, Lo Seavey, Al Nason, Bob McCabe, Al Casey, Al Hatchison, Joe Gould (it's his lake where the good pike fishing is now), James Affleck (brother of George Affleck of Arbo), Sid McDonald, Warren McLean, Hugh Cox, Jim Weatherbee, Pat Hawley, Pat O'Halloran, Cleve Stafford, Charley Seeley, Charles Lyons, Gillette Beecher, Chris Burns, Tom McDougall, Tom Smith, Archie McBurnie, James Mackie, Black Hawk, Mike McAlpine, Jerry Whitney, Luther Brown, John Ferguson, Bill Nelson, Tom Bozwell and Bill Horn.

All of these men are dead except Walt Leeman, Mike McAlpine and Luther Brown who live in Grand Rapids, Chris Burns of Cass Lake and Charles Lyons recently of Ball Club. Many of these men passed away only in recent years and were well known even to comparatively recent comers to this section. Many others are also known both for their own personalities and for the memories, both material and of legend, which they left behind. Lo Seavey, Bob McCabe, Al Nason, and Charles Lyons left descendents who bear their names and who are prominent in the communities in which they make their homes. Others held public office or took part in the development of Grand Rapids and other communities of the county and are remembered because of those connections. The farm now owned by Bert Staley on the Wendago road



was developed by Charles Seeley and owned by him until a comparatively few years ago.

Outside of the men mentioned above, the only inhabitants of this section were Indians, and the story is often told that Mr. McAlpine related the opening of a cemetery in this section and that 'the first white man to be buried in it was a negro who got drowned.' Mr. McAlpine denies this tale. He says that the first man who was not an Indian to be buried in the cemetery was, indeed, a negro lumberjack, but he says that he never referred to him as a white man. Dr. Roberts, the first physician in this section, was the first white man to be buried in that cemetery.

With this 'review' of Frank Hasty's verses, let the reader enjoy the story of the Pokegama bear as related by Mr. Hasty:

'Come all you good fellows who like to hear fun,  
Come listen me while I sing you a song.  
Come listen to me while the truth I declare,  
I'm going to sing of the Pokegama bear.

One cold frosty morning the winds they blew,  
We went to the woods our day's work to do,  
Yes, into the woods we did quickly repair,  
It was there that we met the Pokegama bear.

One Morris O'Hearn, a bold Irish lad,  
Went to build a fire in a big pine stub,  
He rapped with his axe when he went there;  
When out popped the monstrous Pokegama bear.

With a roar like a lion O'Hern did swear,  
Saying "run boys for Godsake for I found a bear,"  
As out through the brush Jim Quinn he did climb,  
Saying "to hell with your bear, kill your own porcupine."

Into the swamp old Bruin did go,  
O'Hern and Hasty did quickly pursue  
As in through the brush those heroes did tear,  
To capture or kill the Pokegama bear.

Old Bruin got angry for Hasty did steer,  
He prepared to receive him without dread or fear,  
With his teeth firmly set and his axe in the air,  
He slipped and fell on the Pokegama bear.

Out to the road old Bruin did go,  
He thought that was better than wading through snow,  
Yet, little he knew what awaited him there,  
For fate was against the Pokegama bear.

There was one Mike McAlpine of fame and renown,  
Noted for foot racing on Canadian ground,  
He ran up the road, raised his axe in the air,  
And dealt the death blow to the Pokegama bear.

When out to the camp old Bruin was sent,  
To skin him and dress him it was our intent,  
And we all agreed that each should have a share  
Of the oil that was in the Pokegama bear.

To the cook it was taken, the tallow tried out,  
Each man with his bottle did gather about.  
When Hasty and McAlpine they both lost their share  
Of the oil that was in the Pokegama bear.

Then it was taken, by the cook it was fried,  
It was all very good boys, it can't be denied,  
It tasted like roast turkey, Bill Monohan did swear,  
As he feasted upon the Pokegama bear.

Now my song is ended, and I'll drop my pen.  
Morris O'Hern he has got the bear skin,  
Here is long life to you boys, and long growth to your hair,  
Since it is greased with the oil of the Pokegama bear.' "



Oct 28-09

Research on Grand Rapids  
E. A. Summer - Hause  
Dec. 4, 1940

P. 1 Col. 2 & 3

Itasca county Independent  
Thurs. Oct. 28, 1909 Vol. VIII - 2

"THE PARK IDEA IN  
GRAND RAPIDS

Should Be Fostered -- Many Natural Parks  
Right In Our Reach

WHY NOT GET BUSY and BE READY FOR SPRING

Council Should Appoint Park Board of  
Good, Active Men.

The Grand Rapids commercial club is on the right track when it promotes the park idea in Grand Rapids. Grand Rapids in its entirety is really one vast park, but like all other parks, it is necessary that it be kept up. There is a vast scope for work in Grand Rapids for a park board. Such a body could work with the citizens in getting up enthusiasm in keeping the individual front and back yards neat and attractive. The abutting streets could receive something like attention. That is a field of utility, however, which would be only a small part of the work which could be done by such a body.

For Grand Rapids' first park, the land east of the city between the G. N. track and the Mississippi has been mentioned, and it is our understanding that the title to that land for park purposes could be procured with no cost to Grand Rapids -- the lands, which belong jointly to G. G. Hartley and the Great Northern railway company, have been offered gratis if the village would only appoint a park board to take custody of them. Why should the village be waiting? Why not take advantage of these things?

But this place is not all the park room there is in Grand Rapids. There are any number of places in town where little parks and some not so little, could be made by just cleaning them up. One of the largest and best of these is the park which could be made out of the territory and around the lake. The opportunities offering themselves in that neighborhood speak for themselves, and need not be elaborated on.

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Then there is a series of places which would make beautiful small parks. We refer to such places as the creek which passes through town follows streets which are not, and may never be in use, for a block or more. Eighth street between Hoffman and Kindred avenues, and even as far east as Leland avenue is one spot that would make a park with but little cost or effort. To be sure, the place would have to be worked up -- cleaned, graded, the creek walled in and dug out in places etc., but it would make a beautiful little park, right down town, and one that could be reached without too long a walk. The flowing water through the place makes its possibilities as a park almost infinite along aquatic lines.

Down the creek, on Seventh street between Leland and Sleeper, is another such spot. There are several nice trees which could be trimmed down to make a very material part of the beauty of the place. At present the ground in question is being used to pile lumber and other junk, and is far from being pretty. Under the care of a careful park board, it would soon flourish into one of the beauty spots of the city. Another such spot is on the street where the creek follows between Fifth and Sixth streets. This is at present, we are informed, used to certain extent as a dump, but when cleared up would make another beauty spot.

Small spots of ground adjacent to these places, land which could not be used otherwise than in connection with such projects as outlined in the foregoing, could no doubt be gotten for the sake of getting such parks maintained. This paper doubts not that the people living or having property adjacent to such places would cooperate heartily in beautifying the places in question.

The places mentioned in the foregoing are only a few of the parks which could be made by almost no effort at all. If our town is not a hundredfold more beautiful than it is, it is our own fault. The Independent wishes to commend the Commercial club for its efforts along the lines of securing a park board, and it



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E. A. Sumner - Hause  
Dec. 4, 1940

wishes it success. The foregoing suggestions are given freely with the hope that they will help in the good work."

G. H. Hause 11/27/40

"GREAT WHITE WAY FOR GRAND RAPIDS

Grand Rapids has decided to fix up one street in that town just to show the rest of the country towns how to do it. They are paving it to begin with, and then after learning that it costs a great deal more to light with arc lights than with incandescent lights are installing lamp posts with Tungster lights in clusters of three suspended from the cross arms of iron posts set in concrete. They are starting with 40 of these posts and are placing them six or eight to the block on alternate sides. - Aitkin Age."

G. H. Hause 11/27/40

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Feb 1-12

Research on Grand Rapids  
E. A. Summer - Hause  
Dec. 4, 1940

P. 6 Col 3 & 4

Itasca County Independent  
Thurs. Feb. 1, 1912 Vol. X - 15

"A S E E N B Y A C A R E F U L  
O B S E R V E R

PROF. PETER OLSON WRITES ENTERTAININGLY ABOUT  
THE RECENT TRIP TO GRAND RAPIDS

Prof. Peter Olson in Cloquet Pine Knot: 'Recognizing that intelligent farming is the basis of all wealth, businessmen and farmers are gradually getting together and are studying how farm labor may become less arduous and more profitable. It is probable that the editor of "The Pine Knot" had this in mind when he arranged for the excursion to Grand Rapids.

Mr. McGuire, the cordial and hospitable superintendent of the state Farm, at Grand Rapids, did everything in his power to show us that farming in Northeastern Minnesota may be highly profitable. He proved to our entire satisfaction that the best way to find out whether a farm is profitable or not is to run it on a business basis. He showed us how he kept an accurate account of the feed for each cow as also of the number of pounds of butter fat it's milk produced at each milking. In this way, he said he knew to a cent the actual value of every cow in his barn. This record proved to us that it cost no more to feed a cow producing 300 pounds of butterfat than it does to feed one producing less than a hundred pounds. Mr. McGuire is of the opinion that ensilage is the best and cheapest food for cattle and that a silo pays for itself in a short time.

After he had shown us through the dairy barn, he took us to the chicken department. The man in charge told us that one reason why chickens are not as profitable as they should be, is, that they are fed too much. The allowance given each grown chicken at the state farm there is 1/6 of a pound a day. This food was scattered between sand and straw and the chickens could only get it with a great deal of work.



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Then Mr. McGuire took us back to Grand Rapids to look over the creamery.

He told us that their creamery paid higher prices for butterfat than most creameries because they had installed a pasteurizing plant. He said that they sold pasteurized milk at current prices to patrons in the city and made a good profit on it.

When we asked Mr. McGuire if he thought that a creamery could be successful at Cloquet, he said that he felt sure it could be since there were more cows tributary to Cloquet than to Grand Rapids.

In the evening the Commercial Club of the city gave us an excellent banquet at the hotel. The Grand Rapids business men are justly proud of their city with its "White Way" lighted streets, and we have every reason to say that Grand Rapids may well be proud of its business men, -- the men who banqueted and toasted us with generous hospitality.

The next morning Conductor Vibert escorted us by a round-about route to the Hartley Farm, or as it is also called the Island Farm. Mr. Smith, the farm superintendent, spared no effort in showing us around. He told us that five years ago this farm was all swamp; that people in general thought that the land had no value for farming, but that Mr. Hartley realized the fertility of the soil; that none was better when it was drained and that he decided to establish one of the model farms in Minnesota, at that place. Mr. Smith said that he as well as Mr. Hartley were partial to the Guernsey cattle since they had many reasons for believing that this breed was the best for Northern Minnesota. He showed us through the dairy farm which is 215 ft. long. The barn is well lighted, and is kept very, very clean. I asked Mr. Smith if he thought that such extraordinary cleanliness paid and he said that it certainly did. As he explained everything about the

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construction of the barn and the feeding of the animals. I was particularly interested in one statement he made. He said that they had tried to find out how plenty of water affected the milk production by giving a number of cows water three times a day while they gave an equal number all the water they wanted whenever they wanted it. They found out that the latter cows gave two pounds of milk more at each milking or four pounds per day. Since many farmers water their cows but once a day, I thought it likely that such cows would give two pounds of milk less per day than those that have water three times. If this is correct the cows with water accessible at all times give six pounds of milk or three quarts more each day than those that are watered but once a day. Valuing milk at 3 cents this would be 9 cents a day more and with 300 milking days in a year the gain for sufficient watering would be \$27.00 a year. Mr. Smith also believes in ensilage, and he said that a farmer should only keep a high grade stock.

As I looked over that farm, I realized more keenly than I had ever done before that it takes a good deal of brain work to run a farm right. The trip to Grand Rapids and Island Farm showed clearly that most farmers need and may have better stock by keeping accurate account of each animal, better seeds by carefully testing their fertility, better soil by keeping many cattle. This is possible for every farmer. Some may not know how to test milk or the seeds. In that case let me suggest that the farmers bring the seeds and milk to the Agricultural department of the local high school and same will be tested free of charge.

In conclusion, I beg to say that the trip to Grand Rapids was highly profitable to me, and I believe that it would pay any young farmer to work a short time at either of the two farms mentioned, thereby learning a great deal of real profit for his life work."

G. H. Hause 12/3/40

(rrc)



Mar 11-18  
Research on Grand Rapids  
E. A. Sumner - Hause  
Dec. 4, 1940

P. 1 Col. 7

Itasca County Independent  
Thurs. Mar. 11, 1911 Vol. IX-20

"H A S A P O P U L A T I O N O F  
2230

POPULATION OF GRAND RAPIDS INCREASES  
ONLY 175 IN FIVE YEARS

Grand Rapids remains the metropolis of Itasca County with a population of 2230, according to the 1910 census returns which were received here last Friday.

While this showing is a gain of 175 during the past five years, (the 1905 census showing Grand Rapids to have had a population of 2055) it is a great disappointment to Grand Rapids, as it was thought that a showing of between 2500 and 3000 could be made. The small increase is doubtless due to the fact that many people who make their homes were away working in other places at the time the census was taken and could not be enumerated."

G. H. Hause 11/28/40

Sep 9-40

Grand Rapids Herald-Review

Sept. 9, 1940

Homes and Public Institutions.

The homes of G. R. number among them many of the most modern type, and are set off by an abundance of shrubbery and well kept grounds. The town began at the very start to ornament its school grounds and other public places by planting shade trees, and their park like appearance distinguish them as much as the splendid buildings. The schools maintain a high standard under the direction of \_\_\_\_\_? who has been superintendent since \_\_\_\_\_. (Before him, name from first, if possible, and note any who have achieved any fame since he left G. R.) The high school annual is called "Pine Needles," and ranks high among the school publications of the state.

Enlightenment, education and culture are reflected in \_\_\_\_\_ churches, \_\_\_\_\_ hospitals, a \_\_\_\_\_ public library of \_\_\_\_\_ volumes, with \_\_\_\_\_ employees steadily in attendance.

The Itasca County Fair is held annually at G. R. and the yearly exhibits compare favorably with similar displays elsewhere in the country.

1901  
The Itasca Paper Company was incorporated in 1901 and at once set about improving the great water power of the Miss. river here. Dams were built which provide at 18 foot fall of water. This was made to run several sets of turbine wheels, 3500 h.p. being available at high water, and 1200 at lowest stage. *On account of* the spasmodic manipulation of the government dams on the upper Miss, less power is available here than if the natural flow of the river was <sup>was</sup> interrupted. (so in 1909 -- see if it is same today)

1909  
The plant of the company comprises a number of brick buildings. Much of the pulp consumed is manufactured here, from 8000 to 9000 (see if figures are same in 1940) cords of pulp being consumed annually, but, in times of low water, the pulp mill



Homes and Public Institutions. - (continued)

1902  
is closed and the pulp used has to be shipped in. The paper mill has a capacity for turning out 50000 tons of print paper each 24-hour day (see if same in 1940 as 1909) and employs an average of 100 people in its day and night shifts. Much of the product is sold direct to newspaper publishers, the balance going to wholesale paper dealers throughout the west. The plant began operations in 1902.

Besides the paper and pulp mills and other minor departments, the company operates a shingle mill in connection with the plant. (check for certainty) This turns out 15,000,000 shingles per annum. The waste from the shingle bolts, as well as all other wood waste, is used as fuel for heating boilers by which means steam power is made to supplement the water power when needed. An additional 500 h.p. is secured in this way.