

These Walls Can Talk: Researching Your House



Every property has a story. Let's uncover what yours might say.

- ***EVERY*** house has history
- **Genealogy** ties person to house
- **Research** people to discover information about house
- **Be clear on “why”**
 - Planning some improvements + want to know original features vs. ones added later
 - Curious about past occupants + events occurred at/in house

Philosophy



Who Decides If Place Is Historic?



- Professional review board in each state
- National Historic Landmarks = separate designation
- 50-year rule
 - Guideline for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) to prioritize preservation of older significance for historical perspective to develop + avoid listing places of passing interest
 - Concessions exist for “exceptional importance” (i.e. Vietnam Veterans Memorial)
 - Preservationists often argue for protecting recent past (i.e. 1960s-80s), challenging rule's relevance for modern history
- General rule of thumb: homes built after 1990 considered newer + homes built before 1920 considered “old” or “antique”

Where To Begin

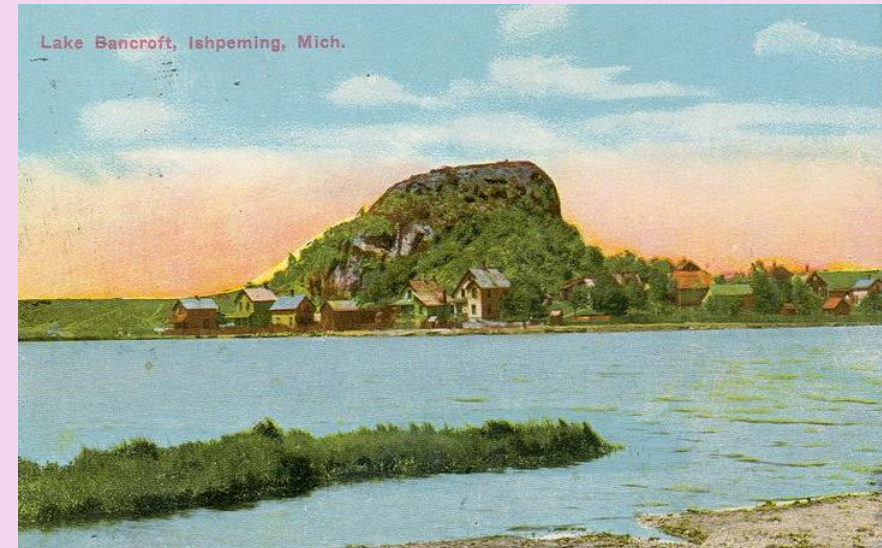
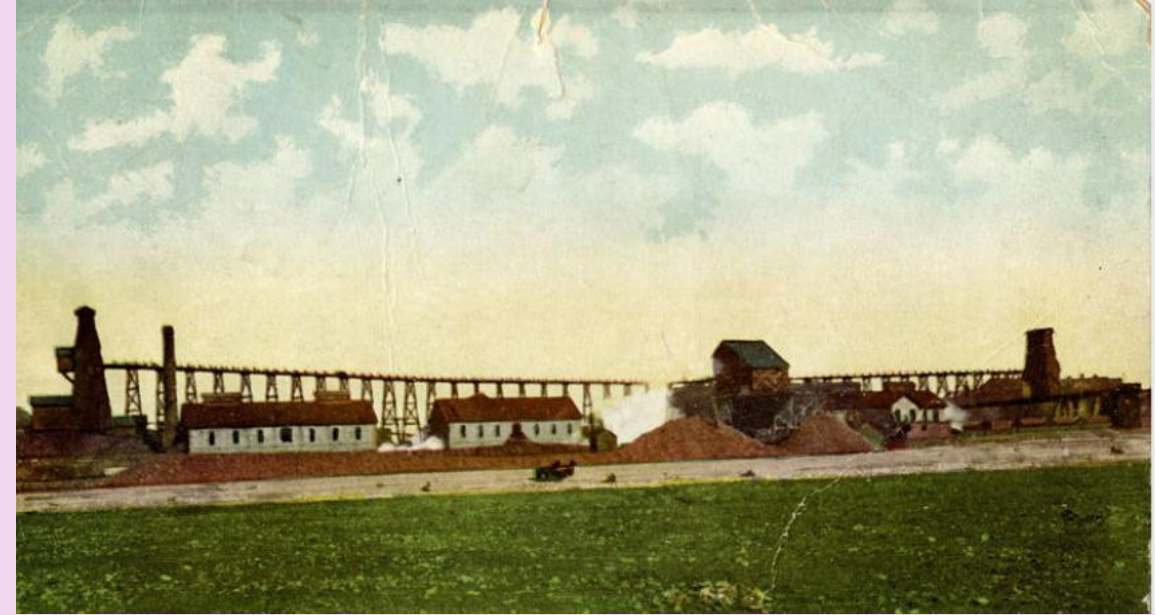


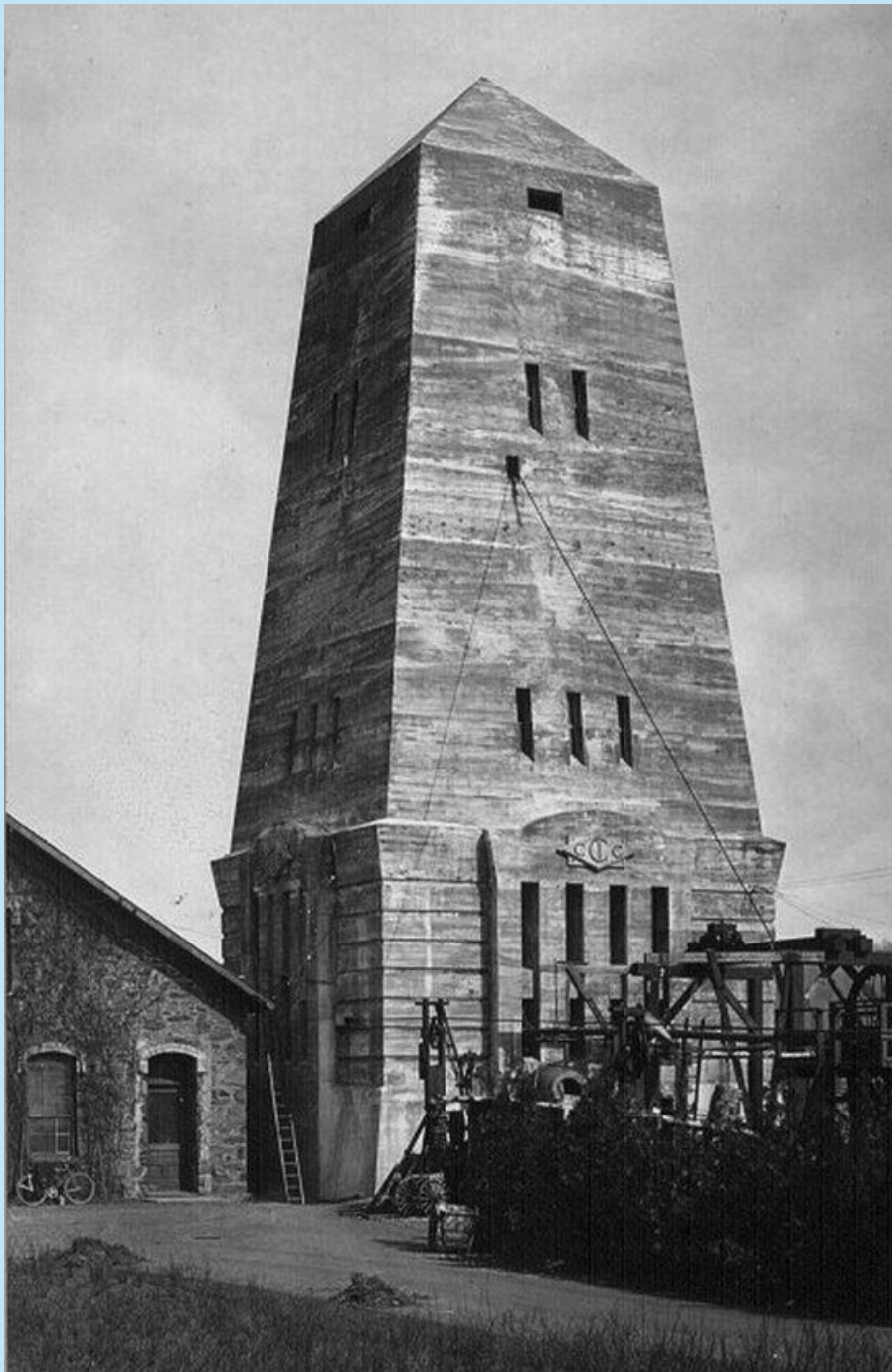
- **Narrow down possible construction date**
 - **Earliest bookend = year city settled**
 - **Other bookend = current year**
- **Learn history of area**
 - **Major events?**
 - **Home or nearby building designed by noted architect?**
 - **Indigenous communities?**
 - **Migration + immigration?**
- **Take down ALL names come across; FamilySearch, census records, birth + death dates, newspaper archives, etc.**

Key Development Stages of Ishpeming

Iron Discovery (1840s-1870s)

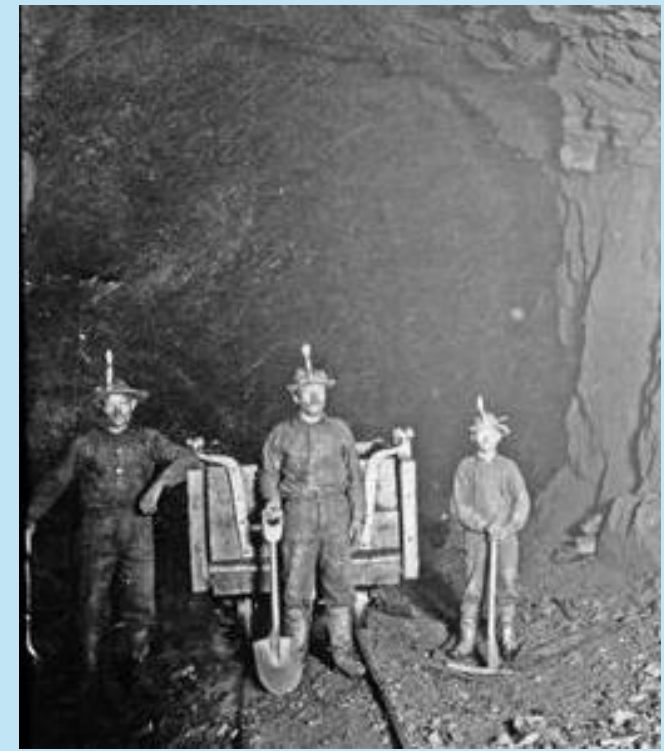
- 1845: explorer Philo Everett (from Jackson Iron Company) guided by Ojibwe leader/healer Madji-Gesick to massive mountain of iron ore (jaspilite) on Marquette Iron Range now known as Jasper Knob
- Locally known as “world's largest gemstone”
- 1868: opening of Cliffs Shaft Mine (world-class producer of underground hard hematite iron ore for 99 years)





Mining Boom (1870s–1920s)

- 1891: Iron Cliffs Mining Company merged with Cleveland Mining Company to form Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company (CCI) under William G. Mather
- Mine economic centerpiece of region
- 1919: construction of iconic 96.9-foot-tall Egyptian-revival concrete obelisk mine shafts replacing deteriorating wooden headframes

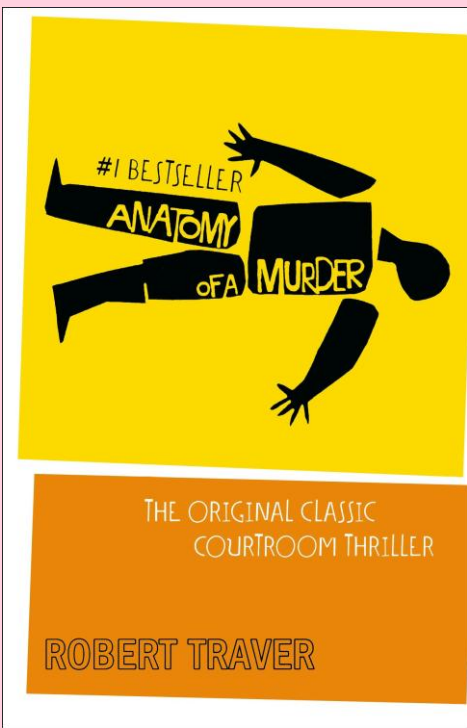




Birth of Skiing Hub (1880s-1905)

- Scandinavian immigrants working mines brought skiing traditions with them; gained national popularity as premier winter sports destination
- **1887:** Ishpeming Ski Club formed, establishing birthplace of organized skiing in U.S.
- **1905:** local banker + skier Carl Tellefsen founded National Ski Association; became U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association





Modern Era & Pop Culture (1950s)

- **1959:** *Anatomy of a Murder* (based on novel by Ishpeming native + Michigan Supreme Court Justice John D. Voelker under pseudonym Robert Traver)



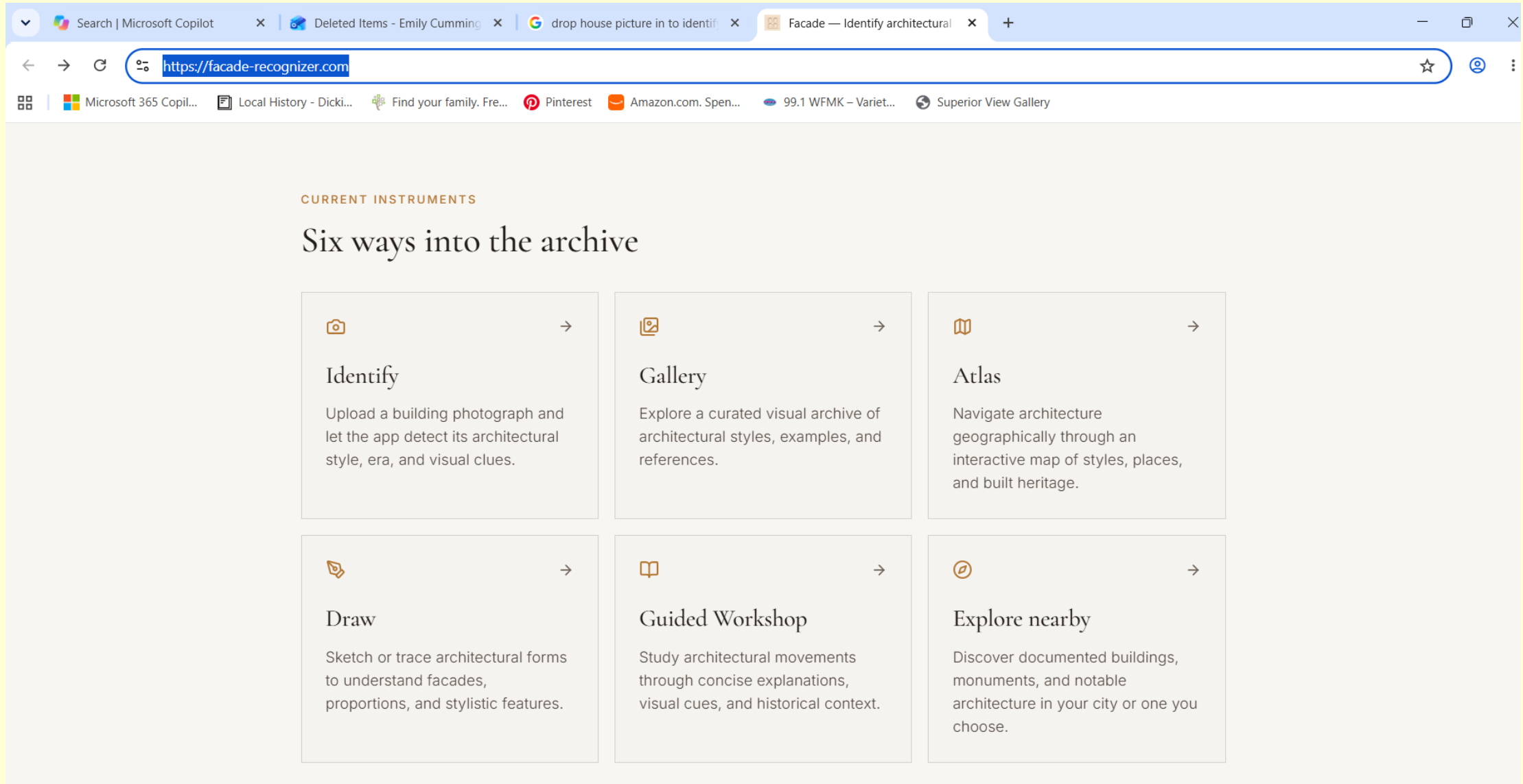
Early Major Nationalities

- **Cornish (English):** among earliest groups (1860s) bringing generations of specialized underground mining experience (1870: 27%)
- **Irish:** one of largest early immigrant groups; remained cornerstone of community into 1900s (1870: 30%)
- **Swedish:** arriving in large numbers around 1868 making “mother colony” due to high labor demands; expert skills as miners, blacksmiths, + engineers (1870: 18%)
- **French Canadians & Germans:** steady numbers during mid-to-late 1860s for both lumber + mining booms
- **Norwegian:** arrived steadily as part of Scandinavian migration waves, including notable group arrivals by late 1800s
- **Finnish:** early 1900s largest/most dominant ethnic group + became premier national cultural center for Finnish-Americans (Finnish-language churches, cooperative societies, + temperance unions)
- **Italians:** arrival 1890s wave of southern Italian immigrants from Calabria, Naples, + Sicily + cresting 1900-1914 when 15-16% of overall labor force on Marquette Iron Range (later due to Italy’s “Great Emigration” + Marquette Iron Range industrial boom)



Façade Recognizer Website

- <https://facade-recognizer.com/>





Late Victorian Era (1870s–1900s)

- Mining Boom Growth: mining camp transitioned into established city; rise of ore industry brought wealth + workers
- Northern stretches of Main Street
- House Patterns: simple framing, tall windows, + ornate porches
- Peak Construction (1885–1899): ornate Queen Anne mansions + Late Victorian designs built as wealthy mine superintendents, captains, + successful merchants financed elaborate construction

- Defining characteristics:

- Asymmetrical shapes
- Ornate detailing
- Steep roofs
- Patterned wood shingles
- Intersecting gables
- Elaborate scroll-cut wooden trim (“gingerbread”)
- Decorative brackets
- Projecting bays



- Sometimes round corner tower/turret
- Large, deep porches across front or wrap around house side
- Carved balustrades on porches
- Mixed textures (i.e. red brick on first floor + fish-scale or patterned wooden shingles on upper gables)





Folk Victorian

- Gable roof
- Front facing gable
- Gable trim
- Decorative gable vent



- Shingle siding
- Clapboard siding
- Fish-scale shingling
- Patterned trim on eaves
- Rectangular window
- Covered porch



Queen Anne Victorian

- Wraparound porch
- Cutaway bay/bay window
- Arched gable window
- Patterned wall shingles
- Multiple gables
- Fish-scale shingles
- Gingerbread



Early 20th-Century Craftsman + Foursquare (1900s–1920s)

- As mining stabilized, companies provided more permanent, dignified, + modern housing for growing middle class of engineers, foremen, + workers



- Neighborhood expansion grew outward from downtown core
- 2 styles popular at same time + builders often combined them

- Craftsman

- One-story compact house built on single level or partial second story built into sloping roof
- Defining characteristics
 - Handcrafted woodwork
 - Exposed rafters
 - Low-pitched roofs (gabled with wide, overhanging eaves)
 - Covered front porches
 - Blend of wood siding, cedar shake shingles, river rock, + brick



- Built-in bookcases, window seats, cabinetry, + sideboards
- Brick or stone fireplace as main focal point
- Cozy, connected layouts



American Foursquare

- Popular late 1890s-1930s + created as practical, budget-conscious reaction against ornate embellishments of Victorian architecture
- Plain, often incorporating handcrafted "honest" woodwork

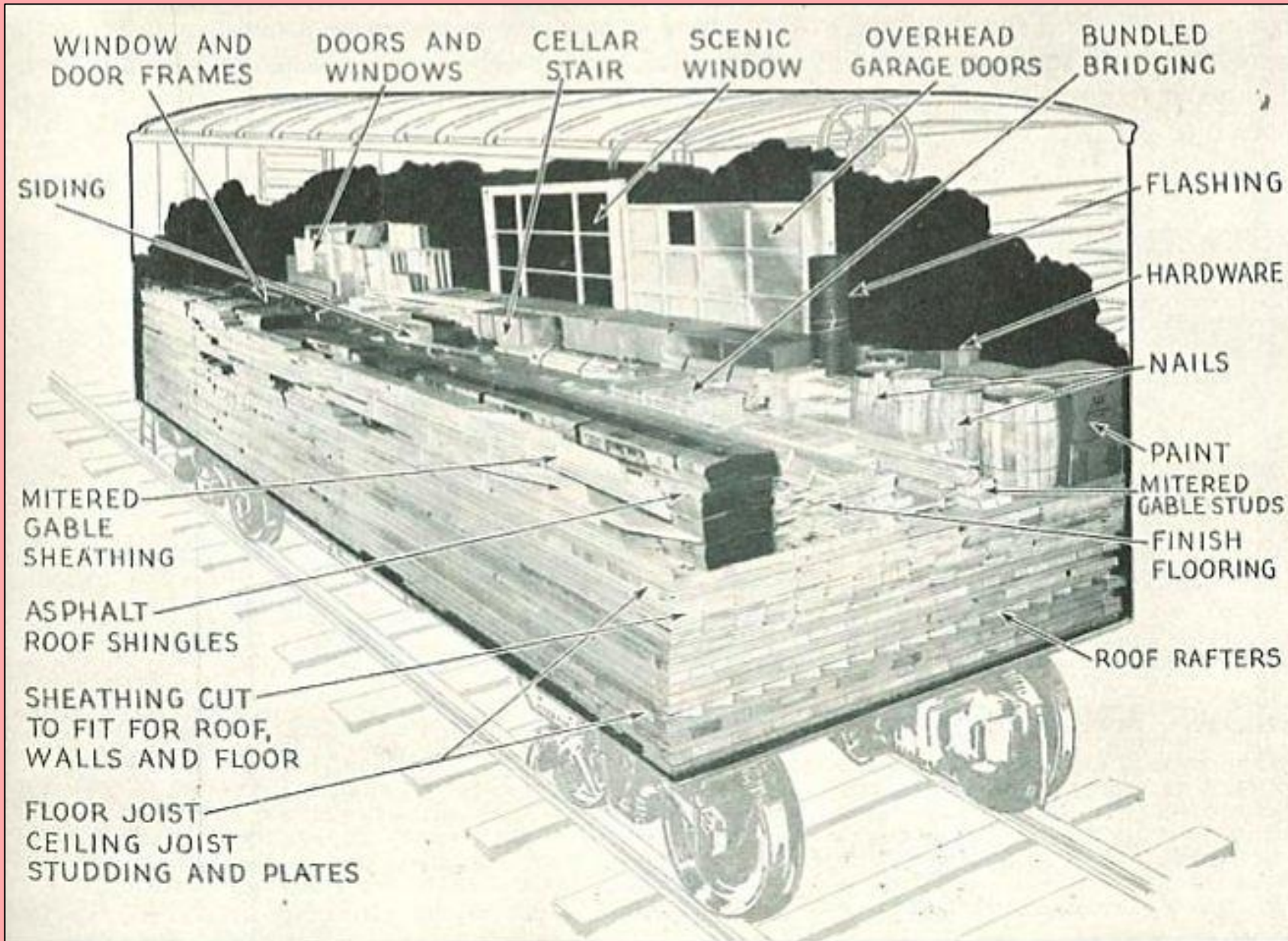


- Prominent central dormer window facing front to light attic
- Wide, covered front porch often supported by sturdy square or classical columns
- Wood frame (clapboard, shingles), brick, stone, or stucco
- 4 large, square rooms on ground level + 4 bedrooms on 2nd
- Open central or side staircase from entryway or large foyer
- Large windows (sometimes grouped)

- Defining characteristics:
 - Boxy shape
 - 2 or 2½ stories with usable half-story attic space
 - Low-pitched, pyramidal hipped roof with wide + overhanging eaves

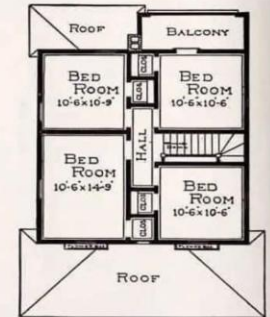
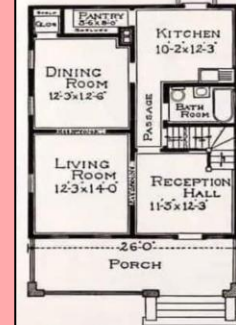


Kit Homes



MODERN HOME No. 264B179

\$938⁰⁰



—FIRST FLOOR PLAN—

\$1.00 buys the complete plans, specifications and bill of material for this house. \$938.00 pays for all of the material, with the exception of cement, brick and plaster, for this house, when purchased from us.

—SECOND FLOOR PLAN—

- 1915-1930: Peak Mail-Order Era
- Headquartered in Bay City, MI
- UP well-connected by rail
- Aladdin + Sears, Roebuck & Co. immensely popular
- Number on boards
- Shipping labels in attics or basements

Mid-Century Modern Era (1950s–1960s)

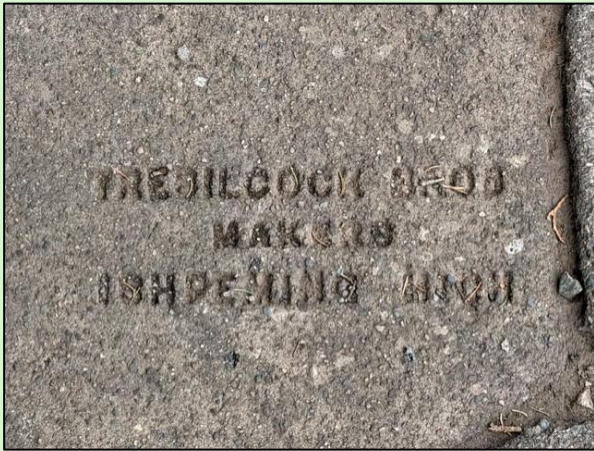
- Cliffs Eighth Addition

- Planned residential neighborhood developed by Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company (CCI) to provide high-quality, affordable homes for average mine employees
- 235 houses to alleviate severe post WWII housing shortage
- Two core home designs to manage costs
 - Series "A" = standard single-story with unfinished 2nd floors intended to be completed later by homeowner
 - Series "B" = true single-story floor plans built entirely without second-floor capabilities
 - Could customize basic floor plans with optional additions (i.e. attached or detached garages, extra bedrooms, enlarged kitchens)



- Design traits include:
 - Low rooflines
 - Integrated natural surroundings
 - Open floor plans

Physical Clues on Property



- Like clothing styles, architectural styles go in + out of fashion



- Date Stones/Stamps/Patents: cornerstones, stamps on sewer grates, brick or mantels, hinges, window pulleys, window spacers (can be on back sides)

Exterior

- Outside all one architectural style, or different styles visible?
- More than one may signal later addition to original structure
- If inside section different architectural style than outside, likely major remodeling in area, but not addition



- All made of same material or different?
- Even subtle differences, could indicate addition
- Tip: Queen Anne style known for incorporating many different materials, so may not apply



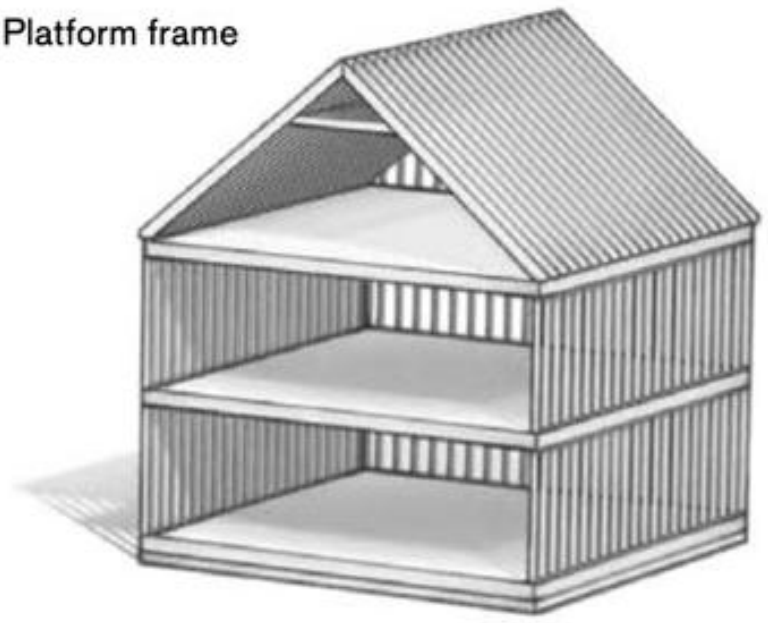
Structural Framing

- Access basement, crawlspace, or attic to look at exposed wood framing + brickwork in foundation
 - Smaller bricks may be older; two sizes signal two construction cycles
- 1830–1900: balloon framing
 - Tall wall studs from foundation to roof, held together by machine-cut nails, joists nailed to side of studs
- 1900+: Platform framing
 - Each floor built as separate "box" sitting on top of wall below, studs span one floor at a time, predominant after 1950

Balloon frame



Platform frame



Examine Floor Plan

- Layout consistent with style?
- If not, implies significant alteration



- Do floor boards all run same direction within room?
- Same size throughout?
- Inconsistent floors can hint at earlier design

Walls + Ceilings



- Walls uniform or thinner/thicker areas where door or window filled in?
- Inconsistent walls can hint at earlier design
- Changes in height could demonstrate wall removed, addition built, or mechanical systems added
- Pre-1916
 - Plaster walls + ceilings
 - Wet plaster applied over wood or metal lath
- 1916–1950s



- Drywall (gypsum board) invented in 1916
- Not widely mass-produced
- Used as primary wall material until after World War II

Wallpaper, Paint, + Stratigraphy

- **Paint stratigraphy**
 - Layer containing zinc oxide = post-date 1845
 - Layer with titanium dioxide = post-date 1916
- **Wallpaper layers**
 - Old houses often have 5–15 layers stacked on original walls
 - Pulling corner back + counting layers will not give date
 - Pattern style will give era markers per stratum



Windows

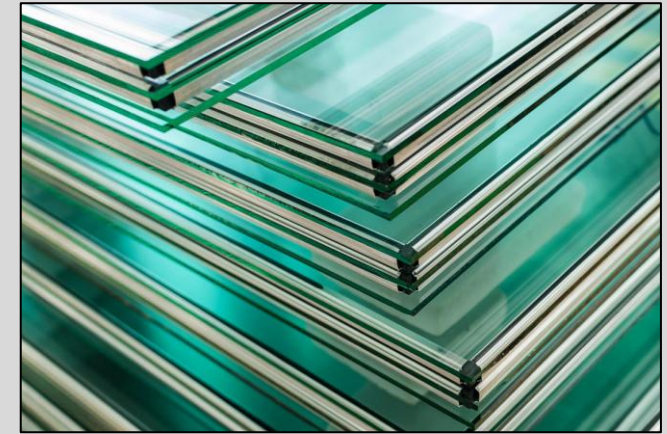
- Window panes = quick visual cue (glass technology = known timeline)
- Sometimes build year on window



- **Crown and cylinder glass (pre-1880)**
 - Handmade, with visible distortion, bubbles, + seedy texture
 - Panes small (typically 8×10 or 10×12) because handmade glass hard to make large



- **Drawn cylinder glass (1880–1950)**
 - Mostly clear with mild distortion
 - Panes get larger (12×16, 12×20)



- **Float glass (1959+)**
 - Perfectly flat, no distortion, panes can be very large



Hidden Manufacturer Dates

- Check hidden utility + manufacturing stamps that typically do not get replaced
- Inside toilet tank or on underside of lid (often stamp exact date of production here)
- If fuse box rather than modern circuit breaker panel, house dates back to 1950s or earlier
- Look at metallic spacer bars between panes of thermal-paned windows
- Year imprinted in sidewalk or address plate



- Cement laundry tubs have “Charles A. Johnson, 614 East A Street” painted on slanted side

Plumbing Materials



- **Pre-1930:** lead pipes or threaded galvanized steel typically indicators of older plumbing

- **1930s–1950s:** cast iron standard for plumbing + sewer lines
- **1950s–1970s:** copper piping became widely used in residential homes



Closets

- Uncover clues like old wallpaper or paint (patterns + color-schemes can be traced)

- **1860-1880**

- Gothic feel with repeat floral or leaf motifs
- Working classes often only in parlor (painted lesser rooms with distemper)



- **1880-1900**

- Large trailing floral designs in flat color schemes
- Upper + working class had
- “Washable” sanitary = popular



- **1900-1910**

- More stylized + geometric designs



- **1910-1930**

- Smaller scale geometric style with rhythmic floral bouquets + striped backgrounds
- During WWI = parlor + bedrooms
- After war, wealthy = paint + middle class = “porridge” or “leather” in solid somber colors + bright Art Deco



- **1930-1950**

- Working class = patterned in living areas + natural designs in bedrooms
- Trailing floral/leaf patterns in autumnal tones
- Small floral bouquets in bright colors



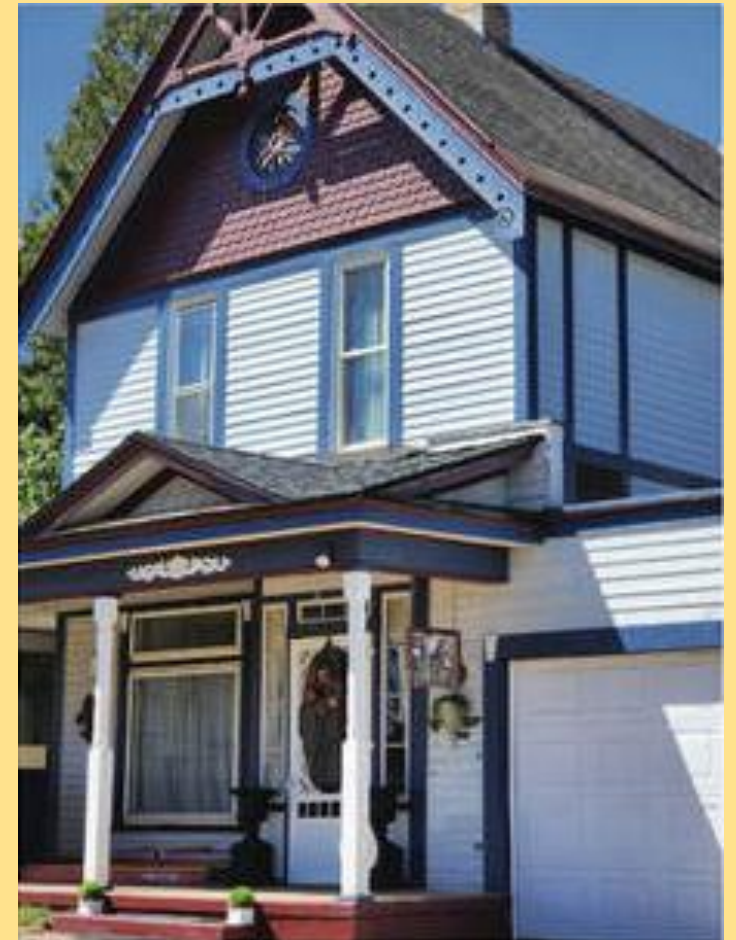
- Long narrow closet with window
- No closets in early bedrooms; people not have as many clothes
- Wardrobe frequently used for clothing + coat hooks on wall



- For this reason, 2 of 3 closets in 2nd story contain window
- Closets probably done during remodel for 2nd floor apartment

Stairs

- More than one building or second set of stairs
- How structures used?
- Who may have lived + worked in these spaces?
- 2nd floor = for family, not guests
- 1st floor = for guests; more likely to be changed



- Sash window does not open on hinge; no outward swing (traditionally slide vertically)

- 1850–1880: brass or iron mechanisms, featuring basic crescent shapes or simple thumb turns
- 1880–1920: highly decorative cast brass + bronze
- 1900–1940: streamlined, heavier "commercial" styles with tall half-cup keepers, or clean-lined, simple brass + nickel
- 1940–Present: lightweight, mass-produced stamped or plated steel

Sash Locks + Door Hardware



- Pre-1900 standard: mortise locks with porcelain, glass, or wooden knobs
- 1880-1930 peak: cast bronze + brass knobs with ornamental escutcheons
- 1940s onward: tubular locks in plated steel

Nails + Hardware



• Before 1880

- Hand-wrought or square-cut nails
- Tapered on all 4 sides, irregular hammered head
- Strap hinges



• Post-1890-1930

- Round wire nails take over
- Fully round in cross-section, even taper to sharp point, + round machine-stamped head
- By 1886 about 10% of U.S. nails = wire; 1913 = 90%
- Plain stamped-steel butt hinges = norm later in 1920s
- (Victorian peak) brass ball-tipped or steeple-tipped butt hinges

- To find nails, pull baseboard, floorboard, or piece of trim from closet (somewhere original framing nails accessible without damaging finished surfaces)
- Do not rely on roofing nails or board recently replaced
- Original framing nails or plaster-lath nails = most reliable



• 1850–1900

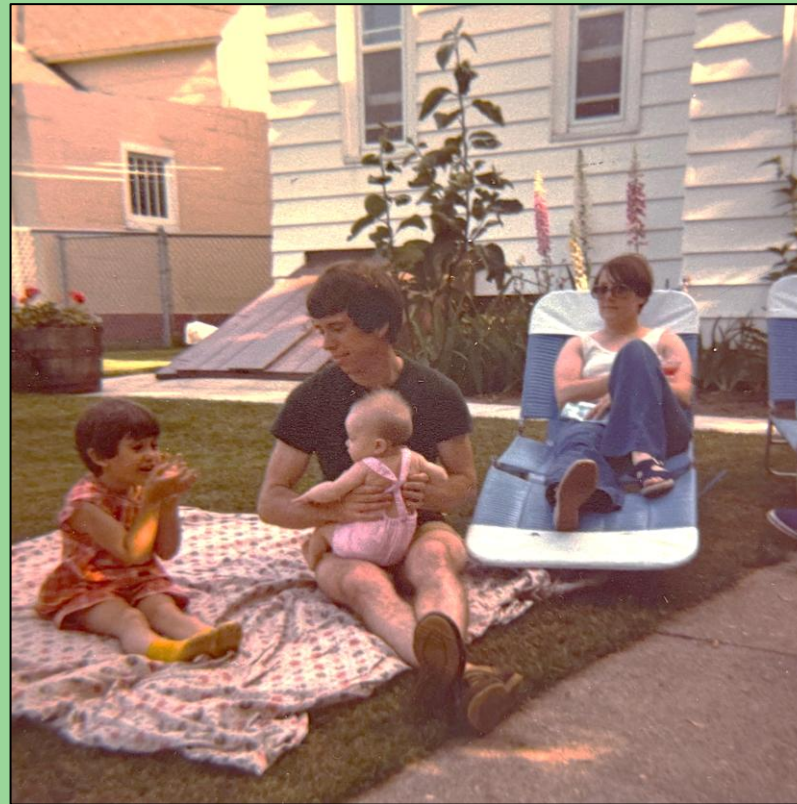
- Both cut + early wire (round) nails used
- Mortise locks with porcelain or glass knobs = standard
- Cast butt hinges, often with stamped maker's marks



Backyard



- Look at buried items find (i.e. old glass bottles or children's toys)
- Rocks from Millie Hill (gray granite + red sandstone)
- Changes in grass color, depressions in ground, or other markers indicating lost wing of house or outbuilding
- Abandoned, overgrown, or removed foliage could locate garden or orchard
- Property of neighbors (walls + fences identical to yours?)



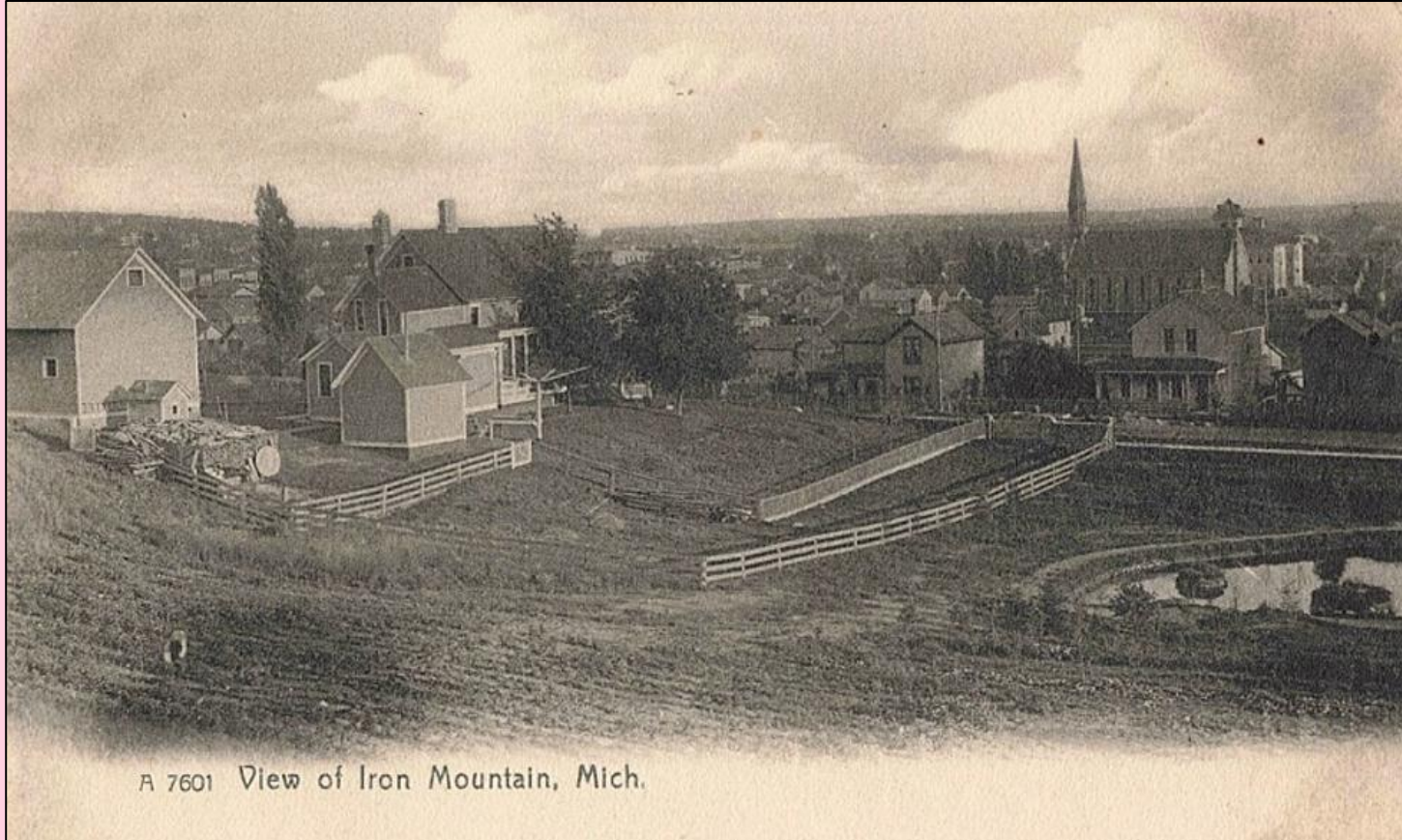
Expansions



- Originally barn (early residents kept cow or two + grazed on side of Millie Hill)
- Patio added
- Garage floor + foundation incorporated where original barn stood (Rogers tore down barn + used wood for kitchen ceiling)



More Tips



A 7601 View of Iron Mountain, Mich.

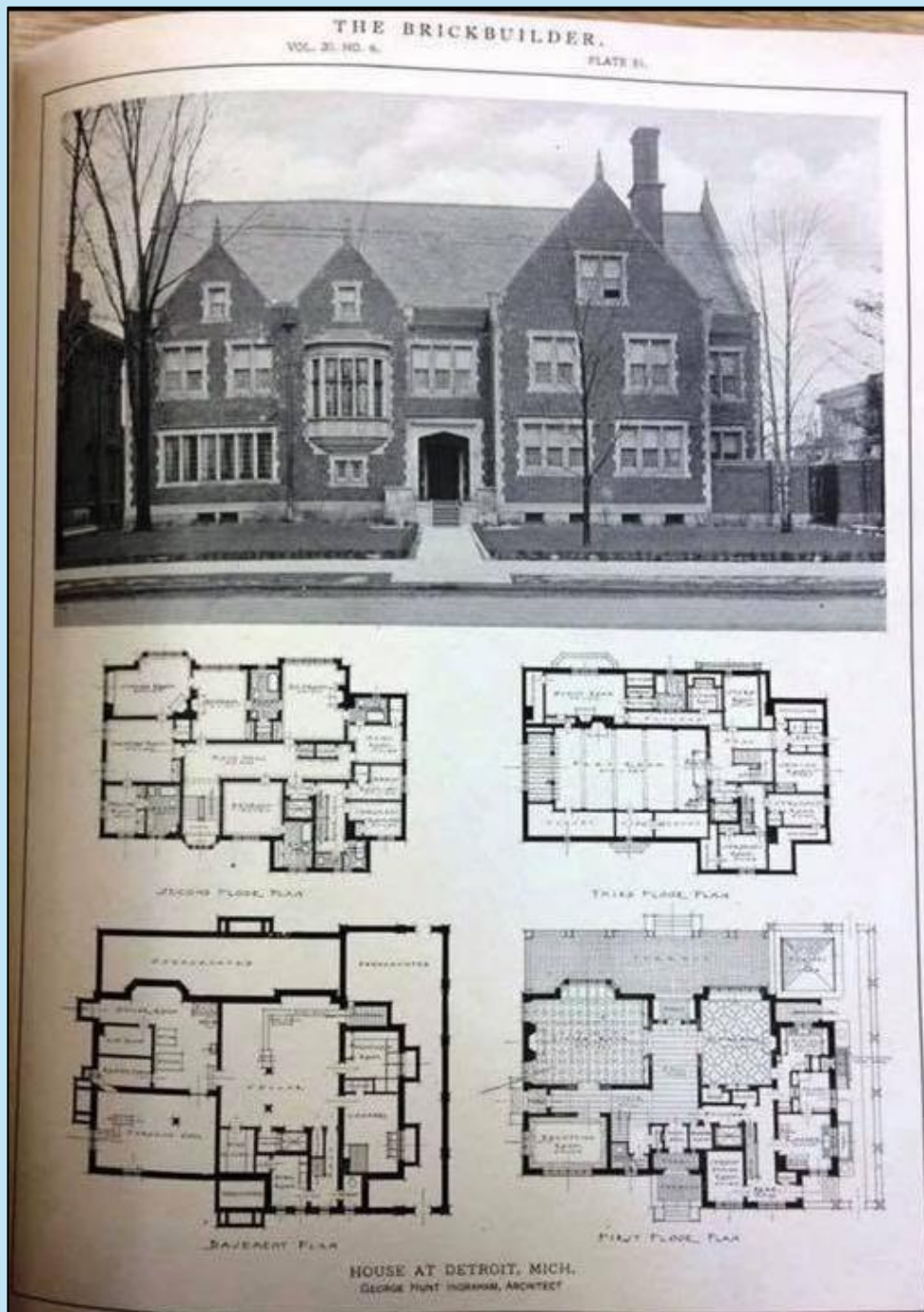
- Check mileage to city center; further from original core house is, younger likely to be
- If building materials inconsistent with documented construction date, house may have been rebuilt after fire or flood damage
- Shine strong light source on upper walls at slanting angle; may find signs of stencils, moldings, friezes + other features
- If subfloor under modern carpeting, pulling up corner near vent can reveal original subflooring materials, newspaper used as insulation, or handwritten dates from carpenters
- Remember roofs wear out far more frequently than external walls

Deeds + Title Search

- Reviews chain of title in chronological list of all ownership transfers
 - Grantors (sellers)
 - Grantees (buyers)
- Hard copy stored at Local County Clerk/Recorder's Office/Courthouse
- Begin with most recent property owner + follow title backwards

- Be mindful of how property transferred – agreement of sale, sheriff's sale, inheritance
- Search for first deed mentioning structure or significant price increase
- Remember: only refers to land, not house



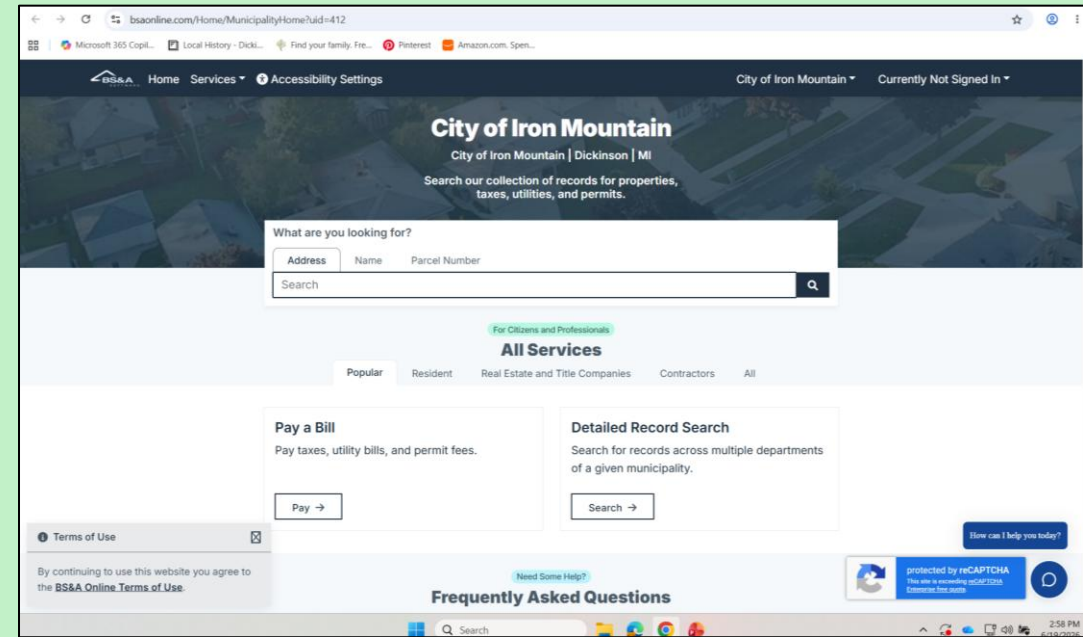


Building Permits + Blueprints

- Provide documented timeline of construction, renovations, + structural changes (i.e. additions, electrical work, garage construction)
- Found at local Building Department, City Planning Office, Borough Office, Zoning + Code Enforcement Office, or similar entity depending on location
- Reveal original build date, architects, contractors, plumbing, + materials used

Tax Assessments

- Valuation of property
- Reveal historical property details like building dimensions + land use
- Trace backwards to establish reliable chain of ownership
- Fluctuations in property classifications or abrupt changes in “building value” help determine when garages, porches, outbuildings, or additions constructed
- Access historical tax records
 - Visit/Contact County Tax Assessment Office
 - Local government: current + recent property details in Michigan usually searchable online using BS&A Online portal
 - State + county archives for older, physical tax assessment rolls (often organized by ward or parcel legal descriptions)



Home value Cost calculator Home details		
Public tax history		
Year	Property taxes	Tax assessment
2025	\$1,864 +6%	\$57,100 +8.1%
2024	\$1,758 +5%	\$52,800 +26%
2023	\$1,674 +3.3%	\$41,900 +7.2%
2022	\$1,621	\$39,100 +3.2%
2021	--	\$37,900 +4.1%
2020	\$1,381	\$36,400
2019	--	\$36,400
2018	--	\$36,400 +2.8%
2017	--	\$35,400 +4.4%
2016	--	\$33,900
2014	--	\$33,900 +8%
2012	--	\$31,400

Property Tax Roll

- **Found at county clerk's office**
- **Comprehensive public list containing all assessed properties, owners, + final taxes owed**
- **Legally must keep, store, + provide to requester**
- **Be persistent; sometimes will claim destroyed because do not want to spend time finding + bringing out**

[illegible]

Property Detail Report

- Compiles public records, deed transfers, + tax histories into one structured timeline
- Done every 1-3 years
- Reveals:
 - Ownership trails: lists previous owners, deed transfers, + purchase dates, establishing complete chain of title
 - Sales price history: shows historical sale prices + dates to understand property's market performance over time
 - Construction + permits: highlights when major renovations or building permits pulled, showing how house's footprint changed
 - Financial background: uncovers outstanding liens, tax defaults, or past legal claims tied to address
- To access: search county's online database or go to County Register of Deed or Treasurer
- Not always accurate
- “1900” listing = “old house,” not actual date

 CountyOffice.org

[Sign in](#)

[Property Details](#) [Ownership](#) [Deeds & Mortgages](#) [Tax Assessment](#) [Nearby Properties](#)

Property Highlights

Property Type	Residential > Single Family > Home
Bedrooms	3 Beds
Bathrooms	1 Baths
Year Built	Built 1923
Square Footage	1,750 sqft Living Area
Lot Size	6,098 sqft (0.14 acres)
Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied
Last Sale	\$172,000 (2025)
Tax Bill	\$1,686.00 (2025)



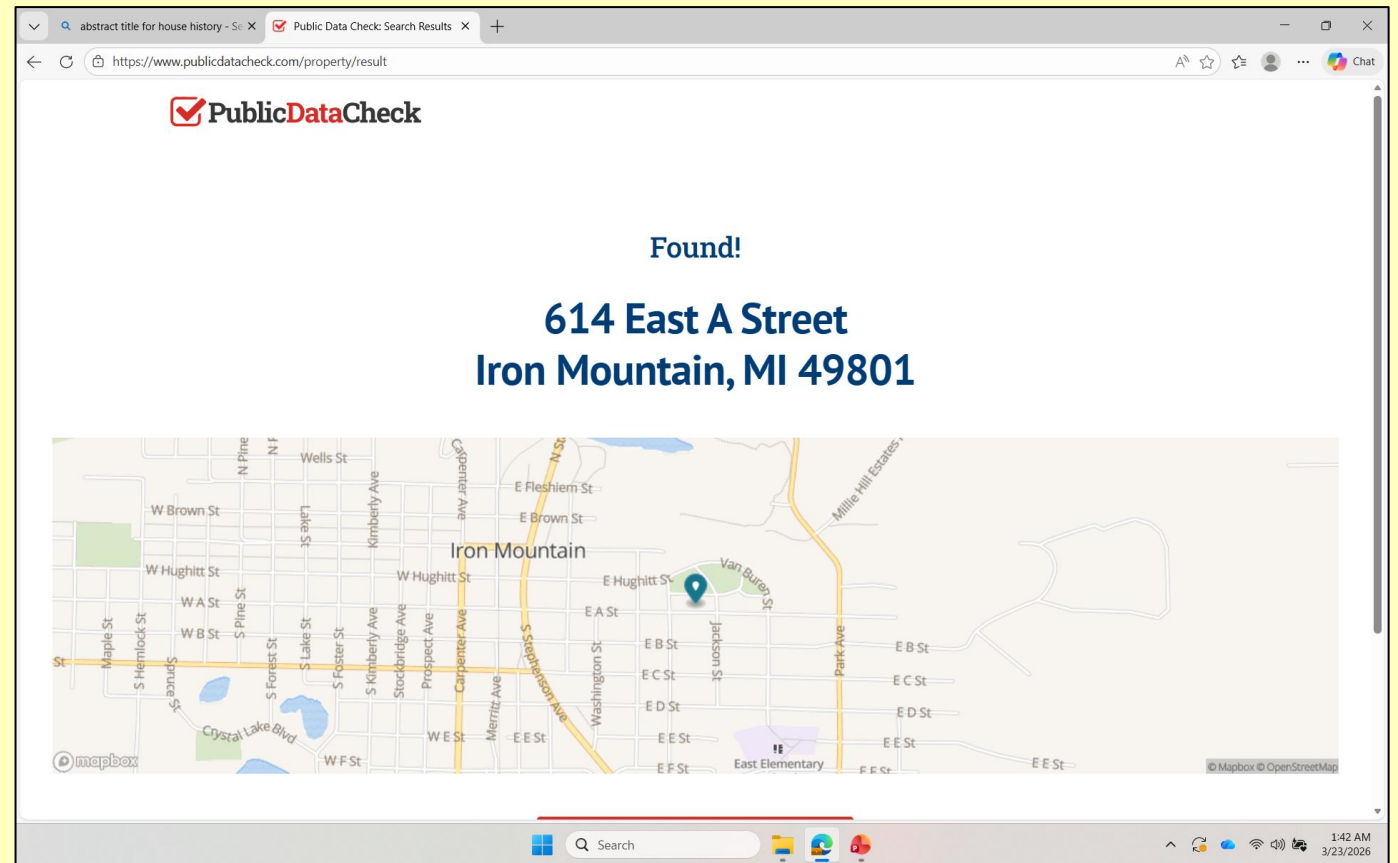
614 E A St
614 E A St, Iron Mountain, MI
49801, USA

Location & Zoning	
APN Parcel Number	051-103-941-00
City	IRON MOUNTAIN
Zip	49801-3504
Type	Residential > Single Family > Home Type
Legal Range	27W
Legal Section	9
Legal Block	10
Jurisdiction	DICKINSON MI
Census Blockgroup	2

Street Address	614 E A ST
State	MI
Property Usage	Residential Property Usage
Legal Description	IM- 3941 LOT 5 BLOCK 10 ST. CLAIRS 2ND ADDITION
Legal Township	41N
Legal Subdivision	ST. CLAIRS 2ND ADDITION
Legal Lot Number	5
Minor Civil Division	IRON MOUNTAIN
Census Block	2030

Abstract of Title

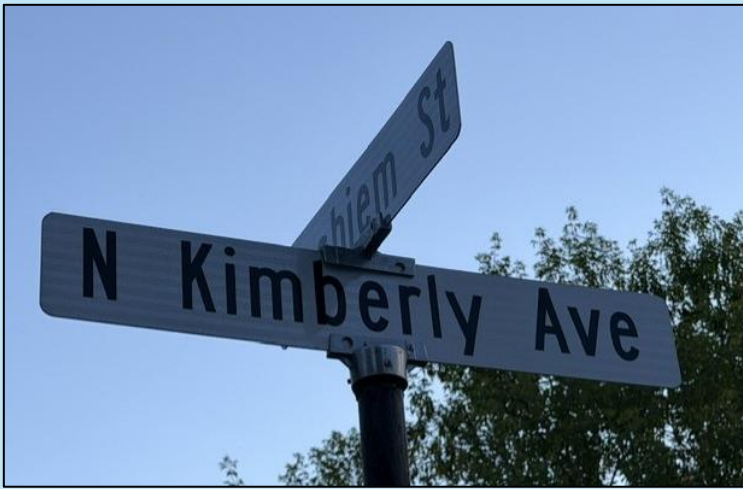
- Comprehensive legal document providing detailed history of property's ownership + legal status
- Includes all legal actions, ownership changes, + transactions occurred with property since first deeded
- Michigan no longer requires



- Maintained by Marquette County Register of Deeds
- https://www.co.marquette.mi.us/departments/register_of_deeds/index.php

Why Numbers May Have Changed

- **New builds:** when new homes constructed, may be assigned new numbers to streamline process for emergency services + improve navigation
- **Street name changes:** if street renamed, all house numbers on street may be reassigned to reflect new name



- **Address changes:** property ownership changes, subdivision developments
- **Legal requirements:** ADA accessibility standards



Census Records

- **Can show when house first appeared in neighborhood**
- **Includes head of household, if owned or rented house, + relationship of family members living there**
- **Updated every 10 years**
- **Check to see if anyone living there now**
- **Early census records will not have street addresses**
- **Beware of changes in house numbering**

Your Search

Michigan

✖

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[Recent Search](#) ▼

[Clear Search](#)

Location

Michigan

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Name

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ED 22-24 State Michigan County/City Dickinson Matched Name(s) Cummings

[Recent Search](#) [Clear Search](#) [Share](#) [Popul](#)

≡ Michigan, Dickinson, 22-24

□□ inson, 22-24

LINE NUMBER	NAME (Last, first, middle)	BIRTH DATE	AGE	SEX	MARRIAGE STATUS	RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	DATE OF ENTRY INTO U.S.	CITIZENSHIP	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	SOURCES OF INCOME	REMARKS	LEAVE BLANK
1	74 87- no no Cummings Alvin W head	W M 36 mar Michigan	WK	42 1/2	attends coach high school	1	SEE OVER BELOW						
2	Jane M wife	W F 31 mar Michigan	H	no	no	no							
3	John J son	W M 3 mar Michigan											
4	P7 88- no no Hardgrove Thomas H head	W M 63 mar Ireland	WK	40	plant protection auto and P.H.E.	4							
5	Clara M wife	W F 65 mar Michigan	H	no	no	no							
6	133 89- no no Johnson Carl R head	W M 63 mar Sweden	WK	56	prop. garage retail cars	6	SEE OVER BELOW						

• 1950s Census

- Released April 1, 2022
- Covers 151 million people
- Most recent publicly available snapshot of U.S. population
- National Archives = free to search
- Considered highly accurate (census takers received specialized training + included special schedules for American Indian reservations)
- Highlights start of Baby Boom, post-WWII migration, Depression into era of economic expansion, + early suburbanization (“genealogy goldmine”)
- Genealogical value = last census most people’s grandparents or ancestors filled out before moving from city to suburb or during major life milestones

- **Tip: because census boundaries + enumeration districts (Eds) change every decade, finding exact street in older records requires specific historic EDs**

- Steve Morse Unified Census ED Finder
<https://stevemorse.org/census/unified.html>

Unified Census ED Finder
(Obtaining the Census Enumeration District for an 1870 to 1950 Location in One Step)

[Stephen P. Morse, PhD](#) & [Joel D. Weintraub, PhD](#)

[Universal 1950 ED Viewer](#) [Census Codes](#) [Frequently Asked Questions](#) [My Other Webpages](#)

Enter as much of the 1950 location as you know

If you select your city from the list of cities displayed, you will be able to enter street-level information
If you select "other" from the city list, you will be able to type in your city or town name

State County City or Town

House Number Street

[See ED Maps for Dickinson County](#)

You can reduce the number of EDs by selecting cross streets and the back street that complete the city block [see google map](#)

Cross or back street on same city block

1950 ED numbers corresponding to your location

[22-13](#), [22-14](#), [22-16](#)

Clicking on a 1950 ED number above will display the:

☒ Census Pages ☐ ED Description (transcribed) ☐ ED Description (microfilm) ☐ Streets in the ED

[Description of the EDs Listed Above](#)

614	179-No	No	Wood	William	Head	w	F	18	Nat. Michigan	OT	No	No	No
612			Alma	Wife		w	M	63	Nat. England	sp	mt.	No	No
						w	F	61	Nat. Michigan		H	No	No

40 hospital attendant hospital P

Historical Maps

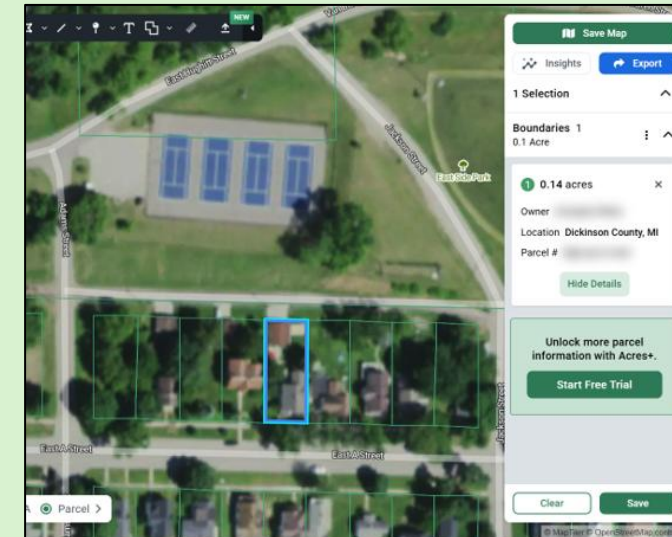
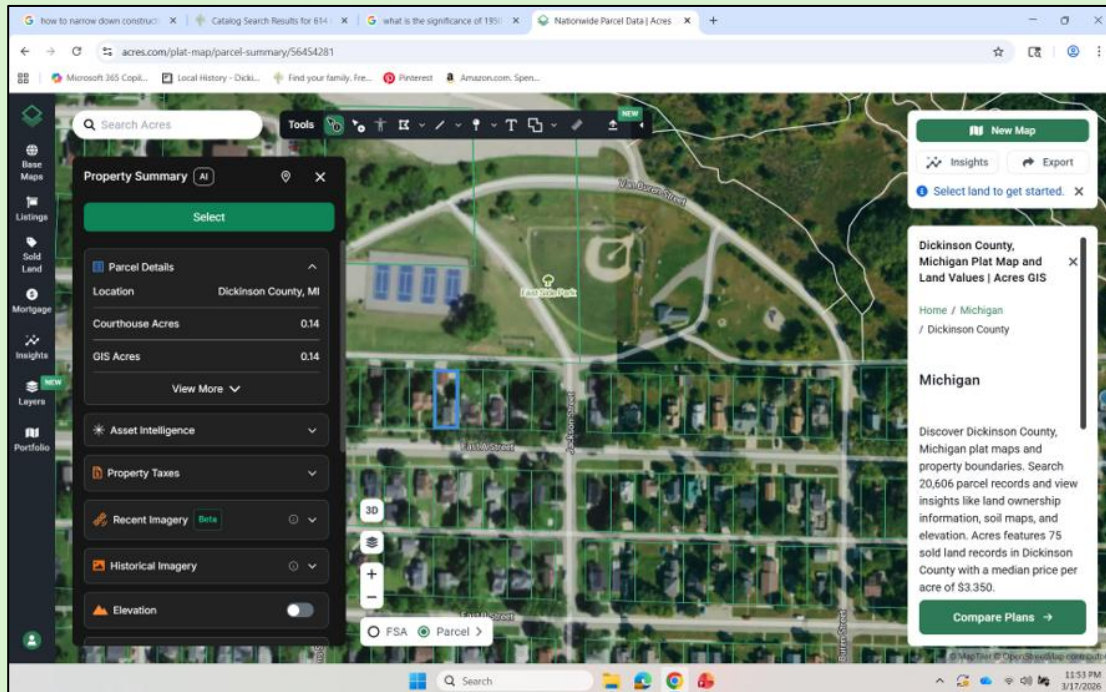
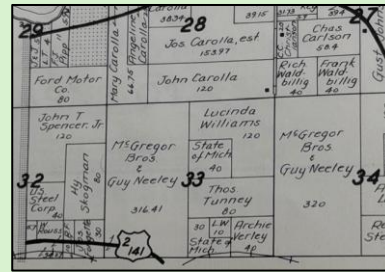
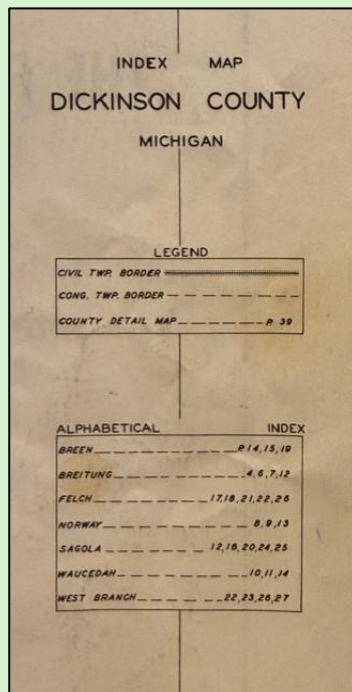
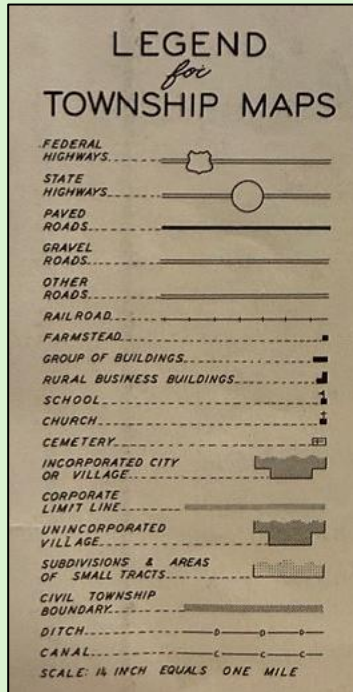
- How land used over time
- May reveal purpose
 - Farm line + land ownership maps identify boundaries + property owners
 - Railroad maps display transportation development
 - Panoramas = expansion of city
- Library of Congress Geography + Map Division, New York Public Library, David Rumsey Map Collection, + Historic Map Works



- Follow community backwards from latest map available to earliest one created
- If town particularly small, look at neighboring communities
- Old maps often included property owners' names
- Can sometimes see outbuildings

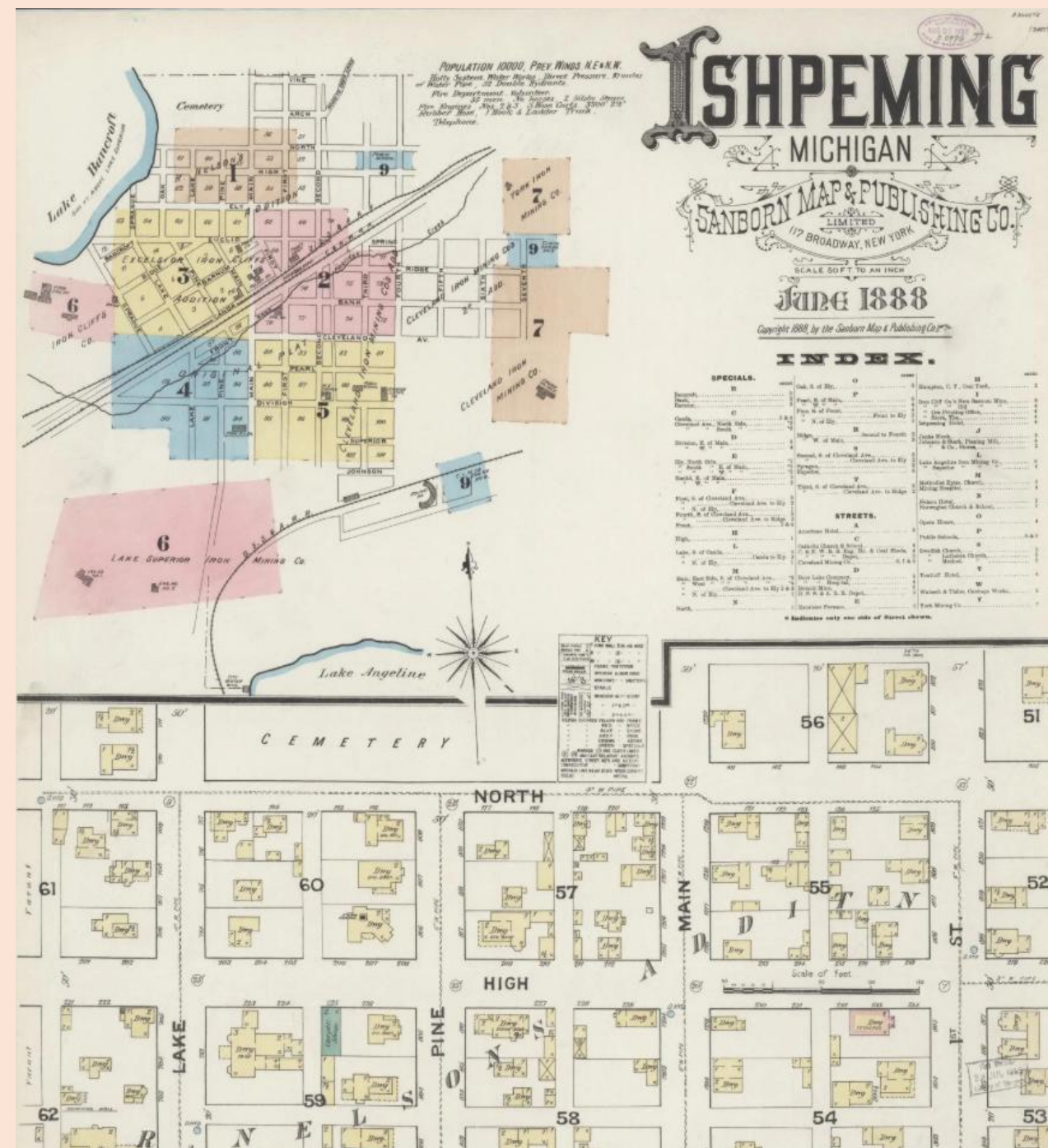
Plat Maps

- Detailed records of land ownership, community development, + personal details about owners
- Can:
 - Pinpoint exact location of ancestor's home or land
 - Discover community ancestor lived in, including nearby schools, churches, + other landmarks
 - Unearth personal details such as landowner names + biographical sketches of community leaders
 - Understand social/economic context of owner's time
 - Help understand broader context of person's life, economic status, + development of community
 - Be time capsule of rural land ownership + growth of towns + villages
- Check lot to help determine date built: if lot = vacant then built after or moved to another location
- Beware: street numbers or names may have changed
- Remember: block lot numbers never change



Sanborn Maps

- Detailed, historic fire insurance maps from 1866-1960s
- Typically did new map every 5-6 years
- Done in towns or cities
- Only covers certain areas of city
- Commercial district, factory area, + residential areas near them
- Outlines each building/outbuilding, location of windows + doors, street names, street + sidewalk widths, property boundaries, fire walls, natural features (rivers, canals), railroad corridors, building use (sometimes particular room uses), house + block number, composition of building materials, including framing, flooring, + roofing materials, names of public buildings, churches, businesses



DWELLINGS.

1st Framed air shafts are shown but colored over. Brick air shafts are left white.

CLASSIFICATION OF BUILDINGS

Shown by varying number of dots or circles. Classed by New York Board of Fire Underwriters as follows:

BRICK

1st Class (.) Slate or metal roof, coped walls.

2nd " (. .) " " walls not coped.

3rd " (. . .) Shingle roof.

FRAME

1st Class (.) Slate or metal roof.

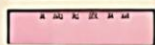
3rd " (. .) Shingle roof.



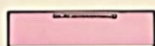
Frame Buildings with Brick Fronts.



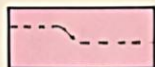
Height of Buildings, in Stories and feet (74 ft. 0 in. and over).



Fronts of marble or other stone.



Iron Fronts.

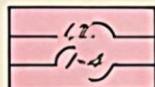


"Dotted line." Interior brick wall, coated on one or more floors.

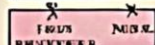


Superior construction.

{ Built of non inflammable material "throughout," except doors and trim.



Communications protected by single fire proof doors { With designation of doors.



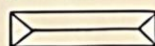
Openings exposing Buildings.



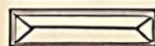
Elevators with steam or other power. { Where enclosed with Brick or Fire proof material a heavy line is drawn around them.



Hatchways or "Door ways."



Sky-lights in Roof only.



" over Opening in door.



Smoke bores.



Retorts, and Ovens.



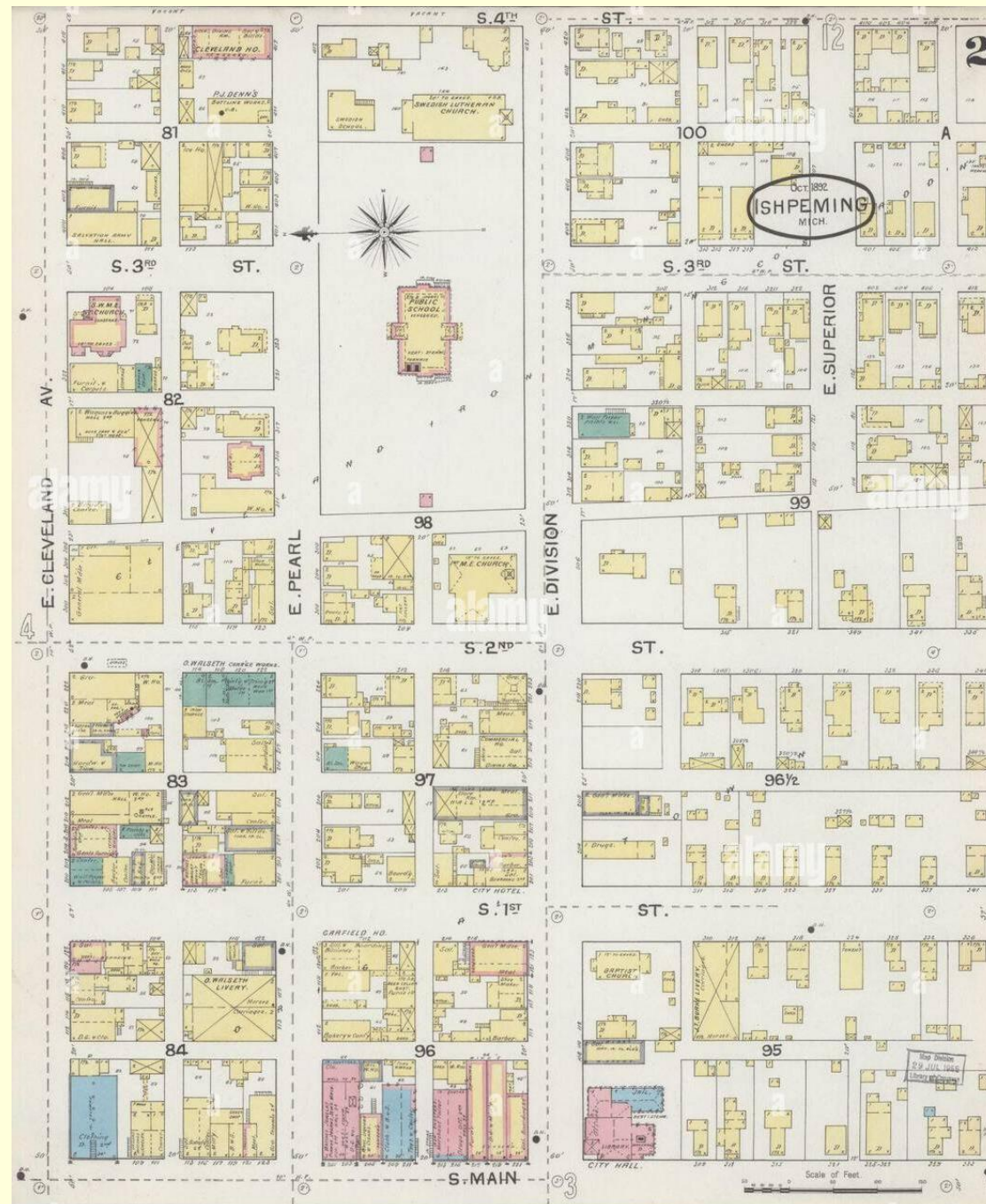
Mansard Roofs.



Corrugated Iron.



Steam boilers.



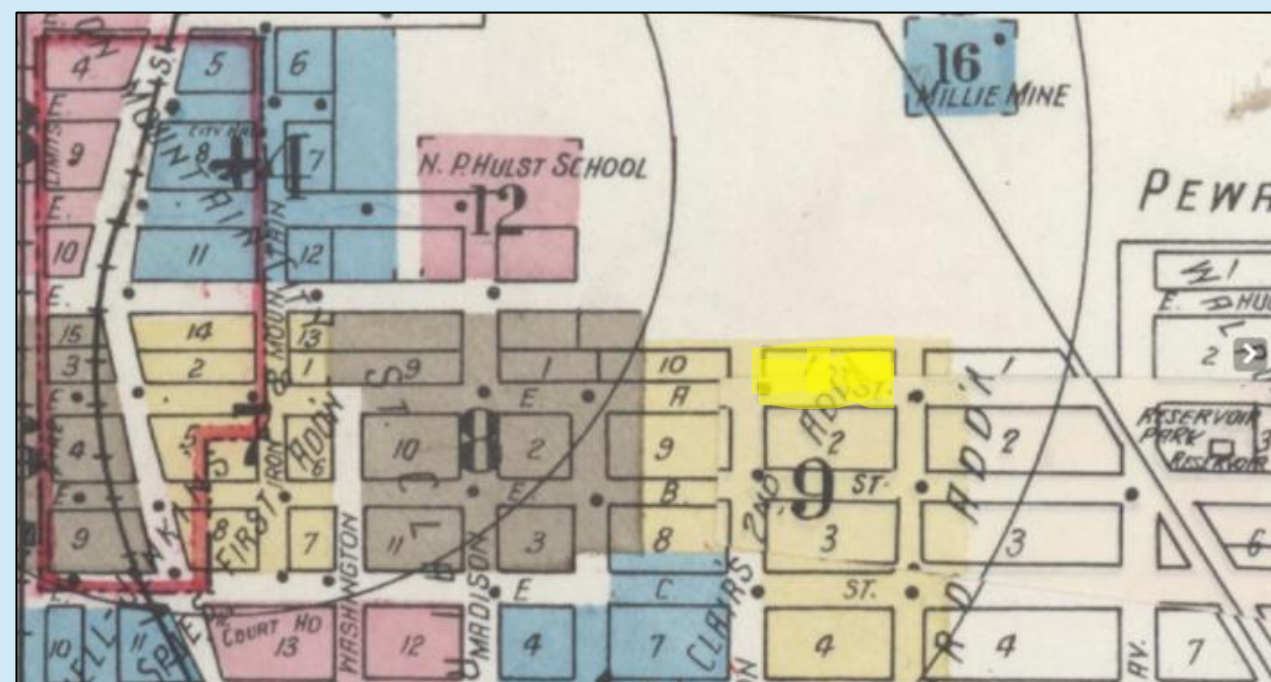


INDEX

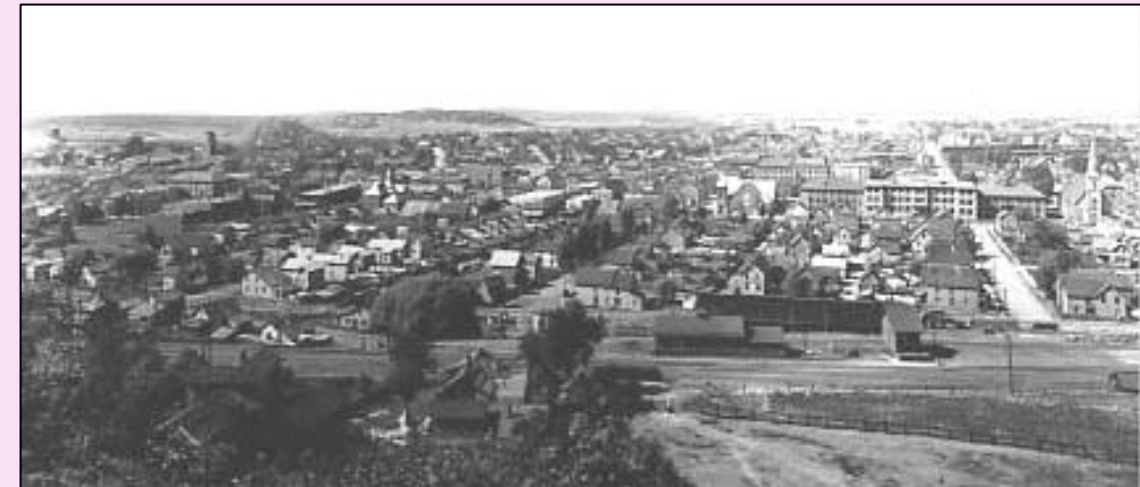
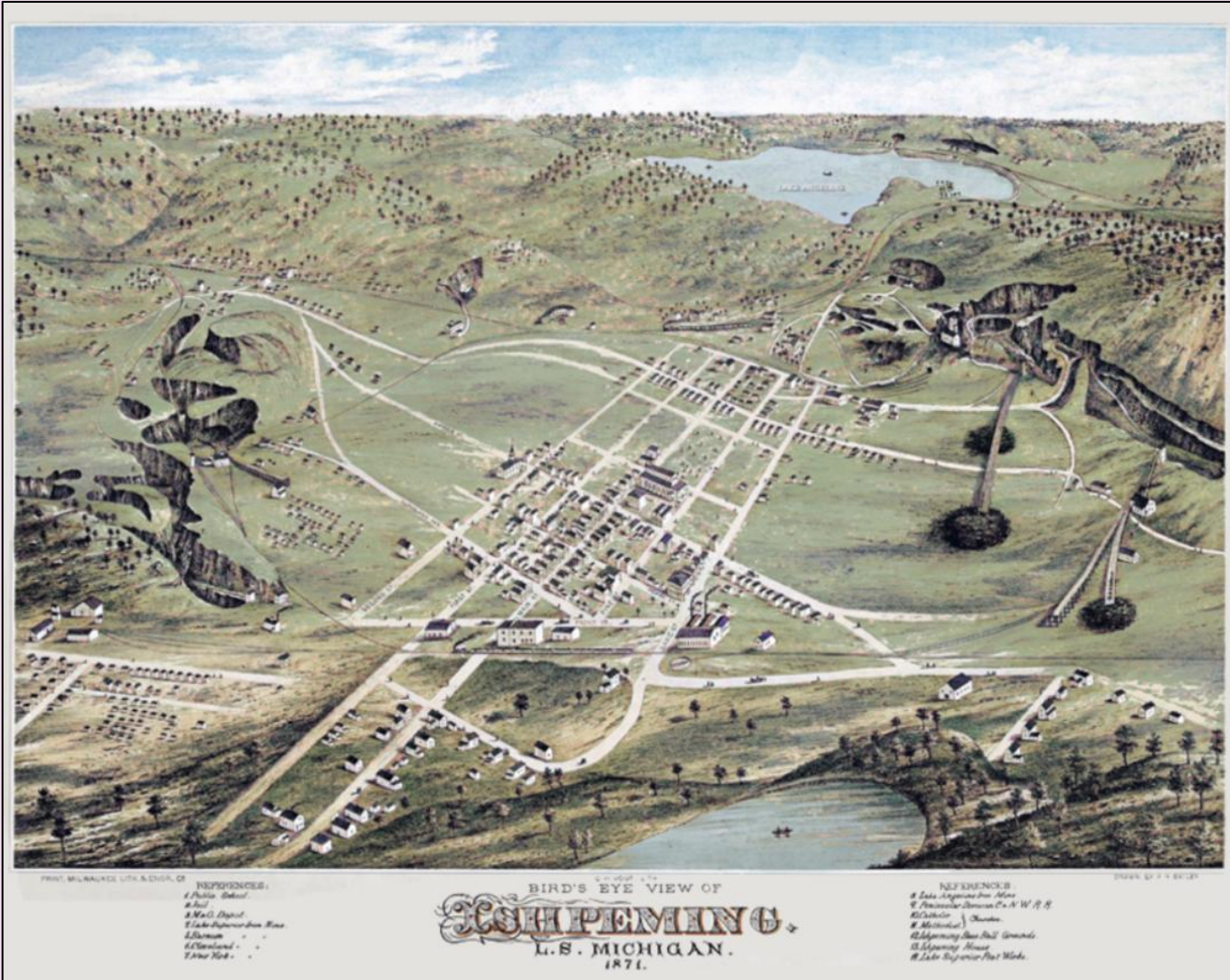
STREETS

NUMBER

A		
A Street, E.,	100-115	6
"	200-401	7
"	402-609	8
"	611-806	9
W.,	100-125	6
"	200-415	5
"	500-915	21
"	1000-1303	20
Adams,	400-611	8



Bird's Eye View/Maps

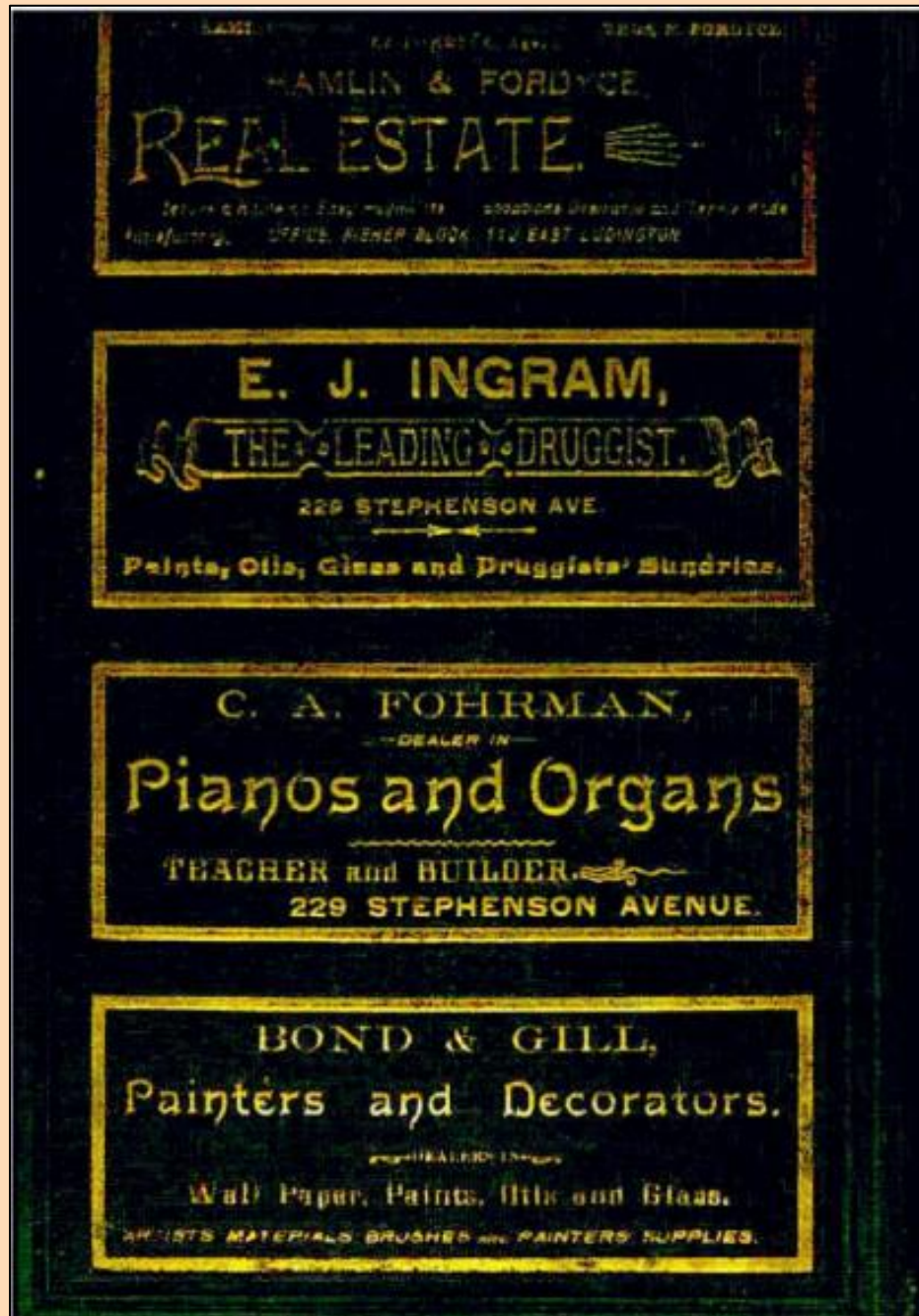


- Can help with identification of buildings (i.e. churches, schools, etc.)

Aerial Photos



- Check local planning departments or state archives for old aerial photos of neighborhood



City + Phone Directories

- Individuals, families, or businesses to view addresses, occupations, + household residents
- Also provide community perspective of that time
- Libraries
- Library of Congress
 - Images online
 - United States Telephone Directory Collection
 - Lists of Available Directories in Print + Microform
 - U.S. City Directories
 - U.S. Telephone Directories
 - U.S. Reverse Directories (by address or phone)

1892-1894

First directory for city of Iron Mountain

600 Charles Kullgren
601 Fred Kronberg
604 W Johnson
John P Lendgren
605 Louis Johnson
607 Albin Safholm
611 Charles A Petterson
612 Charles Landstrom
614 Frank Anderson
617 Gust Carlson
618 Liboire Naud
618 Ulric Turcott
623 Emil Ericson
628 A G Bergen

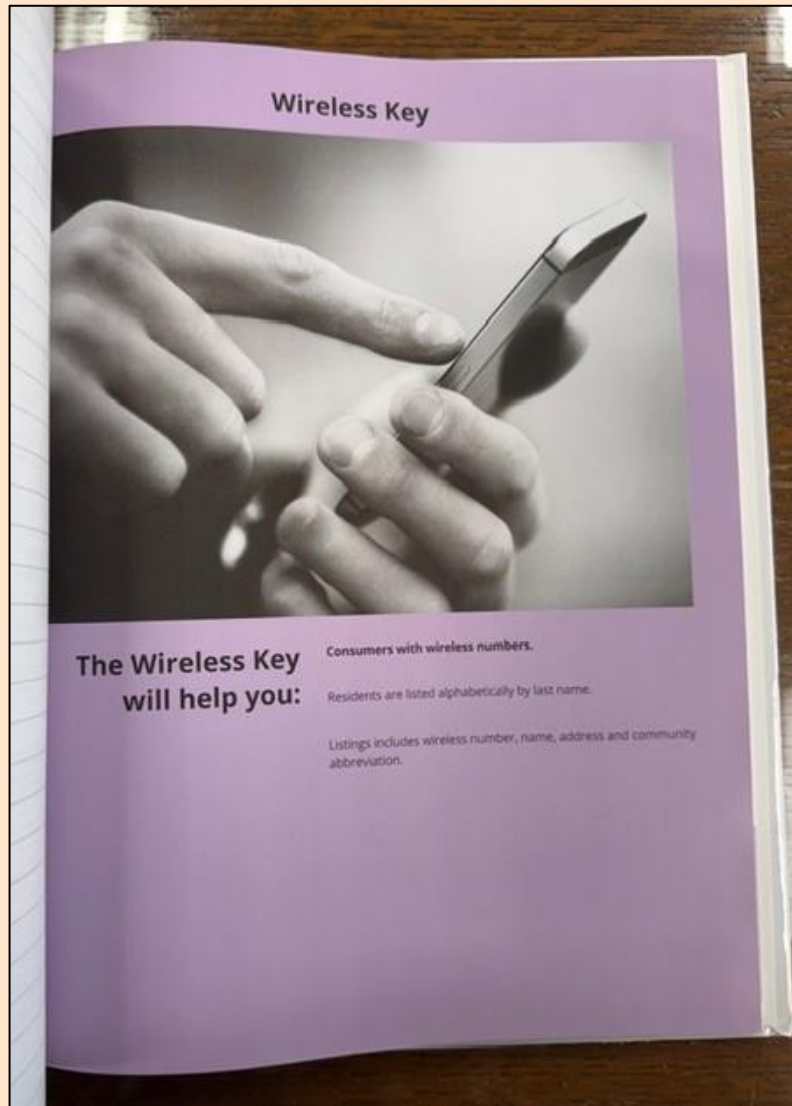
Anderson Erick, timberman Chapin, bds 512 Thistle av
Anderson Fred, miner, res 700 East A
Anderson Frank, miner Pewabic Co, res 614 East A
Anderson G, carpenter, res 803 W Fleshien
Anderson G M, miner, res end of Pine.

Cummings Alvin W & Jean M; retd h741 Cass Av (K) © 774-1107
Cummings Deborah R Mrs genl ofc wkr Dickinson County Mem Hosp
h512 Waverly St (K)
Cummings Esther M (Wid James J) retd h409 Cass Av (K) © 774-4047
Cummings Glen P & Deborah R; quality control Dickinson Homes
h512 Waverly St (K) © 774-9489
Cummings Wm J & Toni M; tchr Breitung Township h614 East A St
© 774-7942

Cummings Deborah R Mrs ofc sec Dickinson & Iron Counseling Cntr
h321 Wilson Av (K)
Cummings Glen P & Deborah R; purch agt Wittock Sup h321
Wilson Av (K) © 774-9489
Cummings Jean M Mrs retd h741 Cass Av (K) © 774-1107
Cummings Toni M Mrs librn Solomonson Branch Library h614 East
A St
Cummings Wm J & Toni M; tchr BTPS h614 East A St ©
774-7942

1976 - 1991

2020



2025

What you will find in this section

MACOMBER ST (LAKEVIEW)-FROM 10357	Streets listed alphanumerically
YOUNGMAN RD WEST	Portion of street described (with suburban designation)
ZIP CODE 44556 CAR-RT R001	ZIP code and carrier route
113 Stine Larry L (1983) 354-8998	Year home was built (19XX)
122 Berg Michael A (1987) 355-4556	Phone number
+N ELLIOTT ST BEGINS	Intersecting streets
125 Samples Lloyd D Jr (Samples Real Estate) (7) 354-7890	In-home business
203 Scott Jack (2) + 355-5556	Homeowners (▲)
Scott Letty J 355-5556	Indicates wireless number in wireless section (w)
205 Leonard Norman L 352-7823	Multiple adults in household
Leonard Maxine E 352-7823	New listing in the directory (Ⓜ)
212 (1) Erridge Ioma @w 354-0989	Apartment tenants
304 Ashbaugh Shane S 355-4896	Length of residency (2- years in directory at this address)
Howard Andrea S	Office buildings and tenants
320 RED OAK MANAGEMENT apmnt bldg optrs 733-7878	Indicates e-mail address available at time of print (@)
1 Rummell Steven D 732-1463	Change on record within the last 12 months (✓)
2 (1) Miller Lorne K 732-1463	Street summary of household and businesses
2 Miller Dennis L 732-1463	
3 Partridge Telesa M 732-8998	
4 Smith Edward J (2) 732-9317	
5 Johnson William J	
+BELLE RIDGE INTERSECTS	
1000 TROY OFFICE SUITES	
100 AAA INSURANCE @ 733-2345	
200 CALIFORNIA FITNESS fitness center ✓ 733-0987	
BUSINESSES 3 HOUSEHOLDS 13	

611 Knapp John W ✓ (1945)
612 No Current Listing
614 Houston William E Jr & Marilyn K ✓ @w (13) (1945)
.....906-448-5032
615 Peterson Isaac J ✓w (3)

Hotchandani Gopal C 1040 FOX DR (K) 906-291-1041
Houston Marilyn M 614 E A St (I M) 760-277-1803
Houston William E 614 E A St (I M) 760-249-3544
Howard Angela L 1201 Main St #111 (N) 906-291-4020

Newspapers

- Small town newspapers covered everything, including house constructions
- May find announcements about property being purchased or house being constructed
- Search for town, street, + specific past residents
- Look in social columns for events at house + visitors
- See if street located along parade routes
- Library of Congress provides free access to Chronicling America (collection of historic newspapers)
- Directory of U.S. Newspapers (can focus on area newspapers + search for articles related to community + people who lived in house)
- Some area newspapers = digitized

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 4, Number 8 [Thursday, July 12, 1899], page 1, column 4

New Cameron Residence.

The contract for the handsome new residence to be built on East C street by **Dr. J.D. Cameron** has finally been let to Bonnett, Michie & Co., of Milwaukee, who expect to commence work on the same in a few days. The residence is of a colonial style architecture and will be two stories and a half in height with a full length basement. It will contain ten large rooms with numerous closets and conveniences and heated with a hot water furnace.

Bought a Residence.

Mrs. C.E. Parent has sold her home at the corner of West B street and Carpenter avenue to **Joseph T. Mason**, president of The **J.T. Mason Mercantile company** doing business at Niagara. The property is one of the finest and most commodious in the city. The consideration was \$3,500. Mr. and Mrs. Mason come to Iron Mountain in order that their children may enjoy the privileges of our excellent schools, and they will be accorded a warm welcome by our people.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 2 [Thursday, June 3, 1909], page 1, column 6

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 11, Number 45 [Thursday, March 28, 1907], page 1, column 1

Build a Home.

Joseph Mongrain is arranging to commence work on a commodious home on his farm a few miles south of the city on the Menominee river. It will be a brick-veneered structure, two stories high with a large basement. It will contain six rooms on the ground floor and five on the second. Mr. Mongrain owns 160 acres of splendid land and he expects to have it all under cultivation within a short time.

- Frank's Obituary, May 18, 1939, edition of *The Iron Mountain News*:

Frank G. Anderson, 79, resident of Iron Mountain for the last 52 years, died at 6 p.m. Saturday evening at home, 705 East A Street, following an illness of only a week.

Mr. Anderson came to Iron Mountain March 28, 1887, and was wedded Nov. 7, 1890 here.

Beside his widow, Hannah, one daughter and two sons survive: Mrs. Edward Hallgren, Norway, Mich,; H.E. Franson, Detroit, and W.J. Franson, this city.

Two brothers, Walfred and Claus, Sweden, and a sister, Helen Anderson, Gran Rapid, also survive.

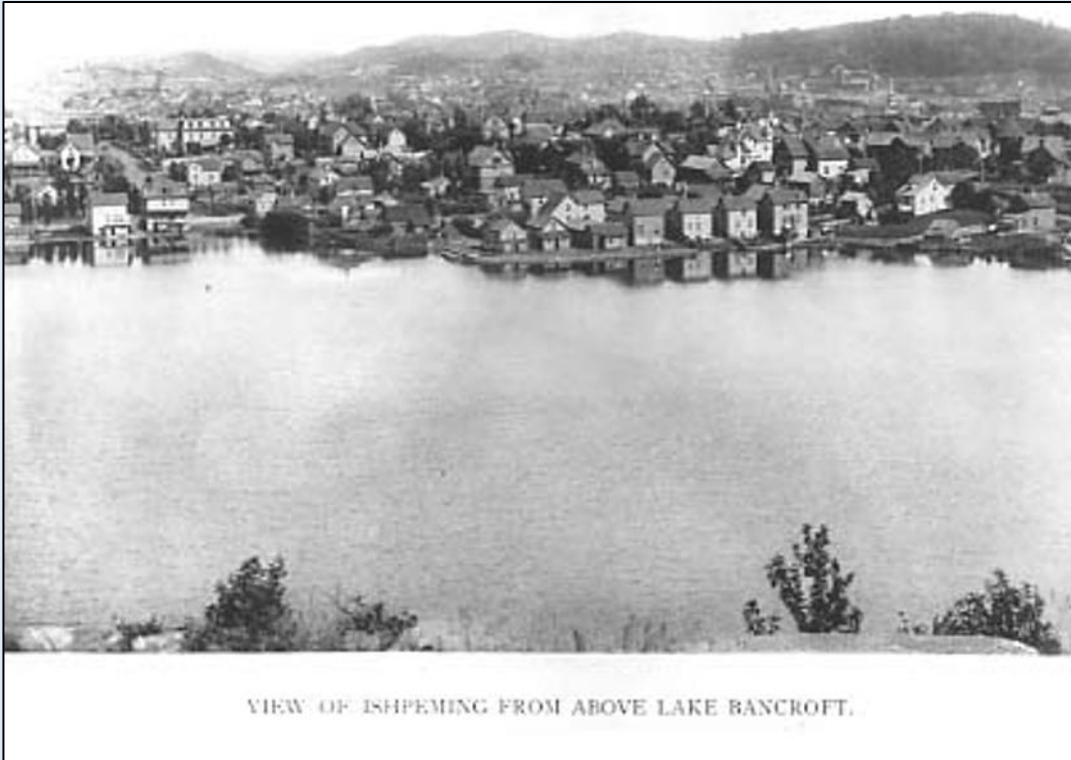
Mr. Anderson was a member of the Swedish Mission Church. Burial will be in Cemetery Park.

Talk To People

- **Neighbors**
- **Local historical society**
- **Libraries**
- **Local business owners**
- **Mail carriers**
- **Explore neighborhood**
- **Other older similar buildings?**
- **How does house fit in? (i.e. if faces different way could have been built on farmland while rest of neighborhood built later)**
- **Might be able to tell who lived in house before you + remember if any changes made over time**



Photographs



- If lucky, may come across historic photograph of house
- Some towns took “tax photos” at various points in time

- Might find evidence of porch or other original details now missing
- If house on main street, could catch glimpse in photos of public celebrations or publicity shots





Final Tips

- **Not every house has happy history (murder, suicide, died in home, held wake in home, etc.)**
- **If restoring, to thine own style be true**
 - **Will look wrong if try to make different than original style**
 - **Do not destroy parts already built well (will save money fixing rather than replacing i.e. windows: \$50,000 vs. \$500)**
 - **Do not replace wooden doors, windows, fireplace, etc. with cheap materials from box store, Lowe's, etc. even if company offering "a great deal"**
- **Do not paint wood**
- **Be willing to take time to do it right**
- **Researching tricks of trade will save you money + mistakes in long run**

Free Resources

- **www.familysearch.com**

- Premier, completely free global genealogical resource for both beginners + professional genealogists
- Provides access to billions of historical documents, collaborative worldwide family tree, extensive methodology wiki, + network of physical research centers

- **Sanborn Fire Insurance maps**

- Available free at Library of Congress for most U.S. cities from roughly 1867-1960s
- Maps show building footprints by year

- **City directories**

- Available free at local library
- List residents by address back to 1850s in many cities

- **Census records**

- Available free at FamilySearch + National Archives
- 1900 census forward includes “year of immigration” + household-level data
- 1940 census includes home value + whether owned or rented

- **Newspaper archives**

- www.newspapers.com or local library for “sold” listings, “built by” announcements, + obituaries that name house’s first owners

- **Deed history at county recorder**

- Trace ownership back
- Vacant lot to improved property usually = build year
- If public-records trail dead-ends (small towns, lost courthouse records, rural parcels) physical evidence becomes primary tool

- **Library of Congress**

- Extensive historical documents, manuscripts, maps, + photographs

- **National Archives**

- Federal census records, passenger arrival lists, naturalization papers, + applications for tribal enrollment
- Military service records, draft registrations, pension files, + unit records from Revolutionary War through mid-20th century

- **www.UPLINK.edu**

- Regional database + research portal for historians + genealogists to search primary source materials, photographs, + oral histories spanning Upper Peninsula of Michigan

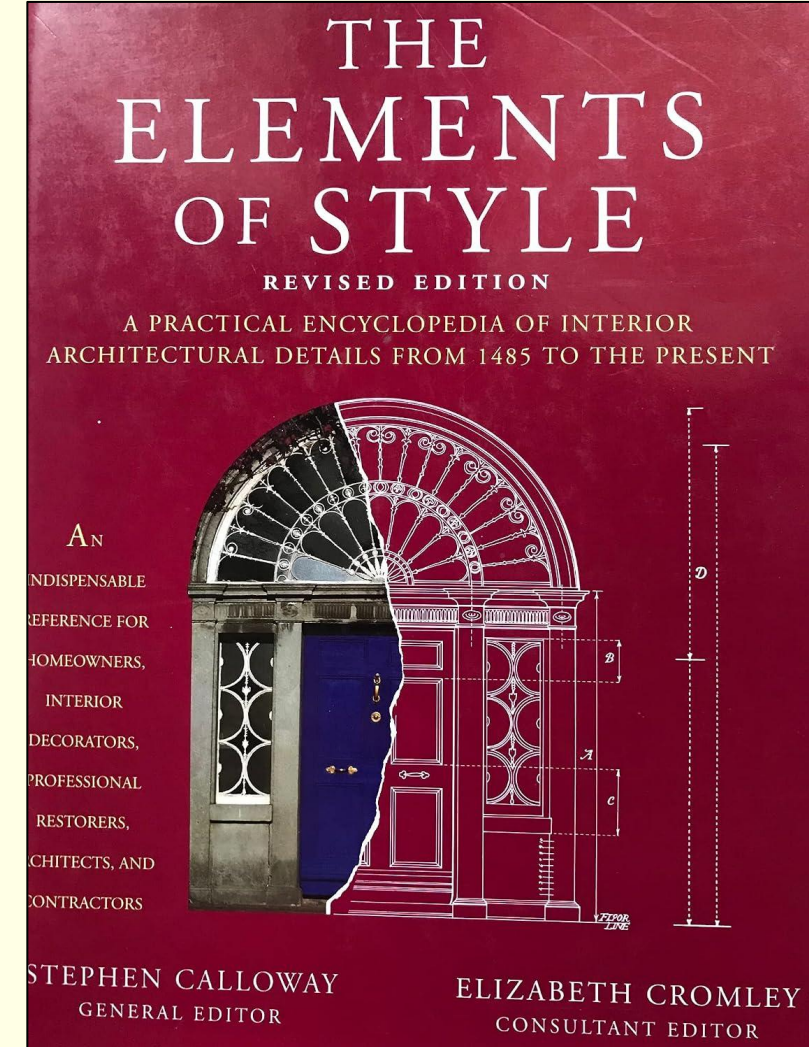
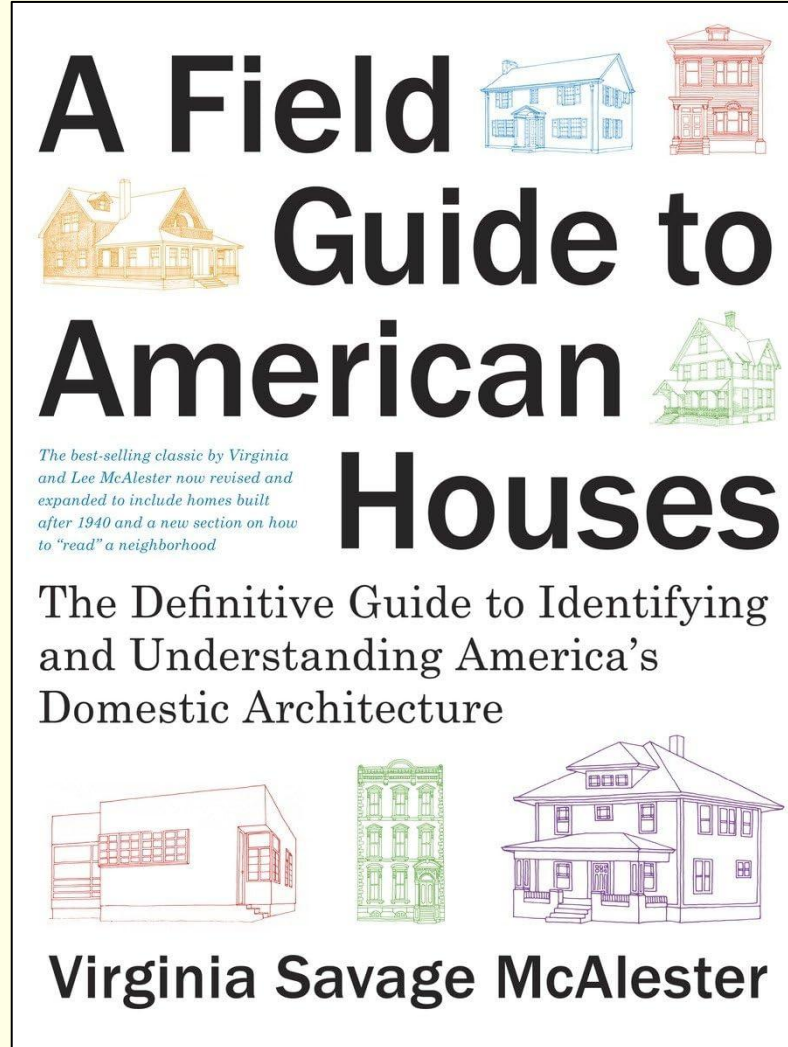
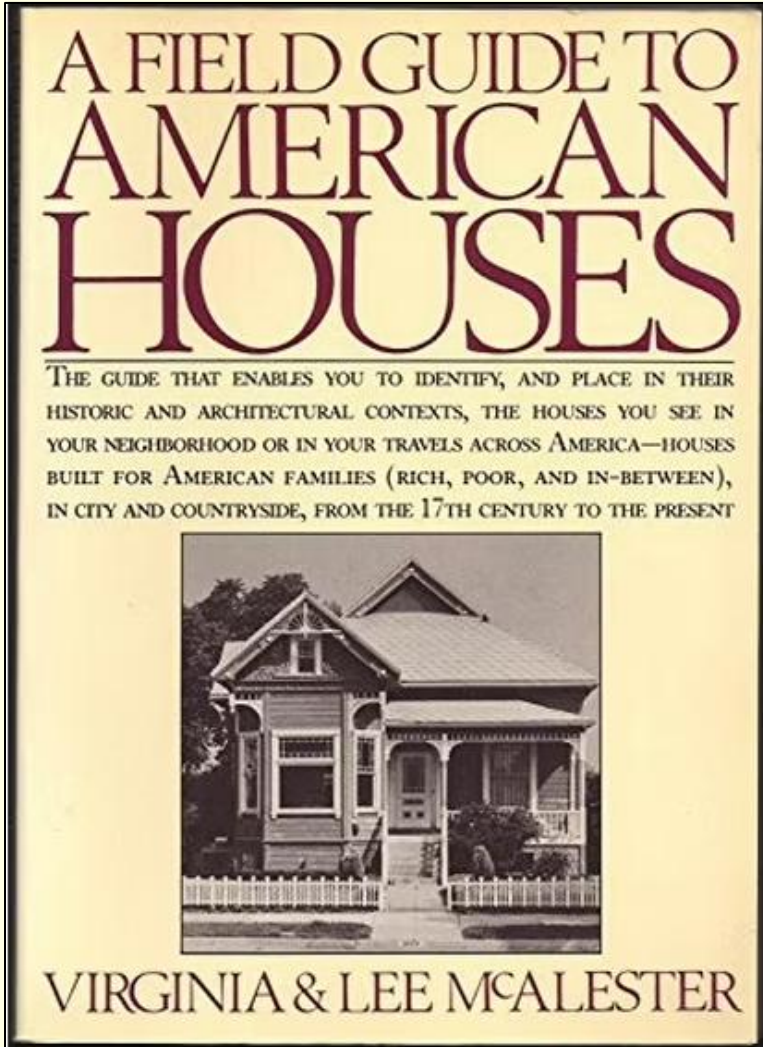
- **https://facade-recognizer.com/**

- Upload a façade to estimate its style and period, follow the visible evidence, study it through drawing, and compare it with examples in the Gallery, nearby, and across the Atlas.

- **www.dcl-lib.org**

- Local photographs, centennial books, compiled obituary records, physical city directories, microfilm of historic local newspapers, + “Local History” tab on website

Book Resources



“If these walls could speak, Oh the tales they would tell, If you could only take a peek, At our story of life as well.” William M. Ward



- Emily Cummings
- Local History/Adult Services
- Dickinson County Library
- emily@dcl-lib.org
- 906-774-1218