

Original Masthead Illustration by Will Bradley

Ishpeming Area Historical Society • Newsletter • Winter 2021-22

## 2021 IAHS Fundraising Summer Events a Success



Voelker Block on Main Street

We had excellent weather for our Ishpeming Garden Tour which was very well attended and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The interesting and informative Ishpeming Cemetery Tours and the new Historic Main Street Tours hosted by Ishpeming historian Karen Kasper were very well received with over 100 attendees.

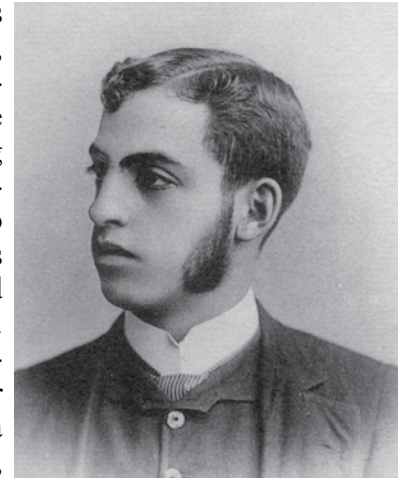
We are pleased to announce that our Historic Places and Interesting Spaces Tour (Home Tour Fundraiser) will return on Sunday, June 26, 2022. We are excited to offer our popular historic home tour once again after a 2-year hiatus due to Covid-19 concerns. Due to the popularity of our 2021 Ishpeming Garden Tour, we are planning a 2022 Garden Tour that will take place near the end of July or early August. Karen Kasper will once again offer her weekly Ishpeming Cemetery Tours during the month of July and the Historic Main Street Tours during the month of August. Please check our website ([www.ishpeminghistory.org](http://www.ishpeminghistory.org)) and/or facebook page for updates. A detailed schedule of the IAHS Summer Events will be included in our summer newsletter.

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## A Son of Ishpeming William (Will) Henry Bradley

By David Lee White, IAHS Board Member

The formative years of Will Bradley's life, ages eleven to eighteen, took place in the booming iron mining community of Ishpeming, Michigan, 1880 to 1886. For five years Will primarily worked for Mr. George A. Newett, editor and owner of the Iron Agitator newspaper, and after a name change in 1886, the Iron Ore. These five years taught Will the



Will Bradley, 1885

printing business and molded the young talented artist into the eventual successful man known worldwide as one of the masters of design during the American Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts periods. Looking back upon his life's work, the Saturday Evening Post called Will Bradley the Dean of American Designers, the Publishers Weekly called him the Dean of American Art Editors, and Will Bradley's peers referred to him as the Dean of American Typographers.

At the peak of Will Bradley's career in the late 19th and early 20th centuries he was accepted as one of the premier American graphic artists of his time. In 1894, he designed a poster titled *The Twins* for the periodical *The Chap Book* that is considered to be the first American Art Nouveau poster. Will was also commissioned to design twelve monthly covers for the Inland Printer

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**The Twins by Will Bradley 1894. The first American Art Nouveau Poster**

Journal in 1894 that would demonstrate his mastery of the American Art Nouveau movement. Will's design for the cover of the Christmas issue for Inland Printer Journal in 1894 also sported a new type (lettering) originally designed by Will and eventually called the Bradley Type. The American Type Founders (ATF) introduced the Bradley Type Series in October of 1895. Will eventually would license five type designs with the ATF, including Bradley Type, Wayside Roman, Missal Initials, Bewick Roman and Vanity Initials. Highly sought after for book covers and illustrations, posters, magazine covers and advertisements, by the time he was forty years old, Will became the highest-paid commercial artist in the United States.

Will was born July 10, 1868 just outside of Boston in Lynn, Massachusetts to Aaron and Sarah (Rowland) Bradley. Will's father made a living as a shoemaker and in his spare time submitted cartoons to the local newspapers. The summer Will turned 11 years old, his father Aaron was very ill with the wasting disease, consumption. Aaron, knowing he would soon die, tried to prepare his son for life without him. Aaron had recog-

nized Will's artistic talent at a very young age and encouraging his son, told him that after he was gone, Will would grow up to be a successful artist. Will's father died November 2, 1879.

In her spare time during her marriage, Will's mother Sarah made extra money for the family as a dressmaker. However, without an adequate means of support in Massachusetts, Sarah made arrangements for mother and son to move to far away Ishpeming, Michigan and board with her sister, Mary Downing, whose husband worked as paymaster for the Lake Superior Iron Mine. On their way to Ishpeming, mother and son stopped in Boston to buy necessary items and purchase Will a new suit of clothes, a suit several sizes too big as she knew it would have to last a few years. In the short autobiography, *Will Bradley, His Chap Book*, Will wrote "*It is your first day in the little mining town of Ishpeming. You are standing in the middle of the road watching children going home from school; the girls giggle, the boys laugh at the new boy in a too-big suit. One little girl has cute pigtails. You like her. At a Sunday-school picnic you tell the little girl you are someday going back to Boston and learn to be an artist. You ask her to wait for you. She promises. With this important problem settled you can now give all of your attention to the question of how you are going to get an art education.*" The little girl with pigtails was Alice Titania Gray whose father worked as a carpenter at the Barnum Iron Mine in Ishpeming. Alice kept her promise, became a second primary school teacher at the Division Street School in Ishpeming, and waited for Will.

Will attended school in Ishpeming in the fall of 1880 at the age of 12, and in the spring manages to pull through to the next grade. In the fall of 1881 Will begins his second year of school in Ishpeming. Will is now 13 and feels grown up, he is having trouble with arithmetic and his teacher says "*Take your books home, Willie, and remain until you have the correct answer.*" Frustrated with school, Will asks his mother "*may I go to work and earn money so I can learn to be an artist?*" Hardly believing his luck, after consideration, his mother says "*maybe it will be for the best.*" The next day Will walks to the Iron Agitator newspaper office, located above a saloon on Main Street in Ishpeming and applies for a job. Mr. George A. Newett, editor and owner of the Iron Agitator likes the look of the young man and hires Will to perform menial jobs at the print shop, Will's main task is cleaning up the Gordon press. When two newspaper jobbers are let go, Will takes the opportunity, fills in and begins learning the craft of printing a newspaper, advertisements, and posters. Will is working from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm for Mr. Newett, by the time he is 15, Will is making \$3.00 a week.

In 1882, Will's mother married Paul Austin who worked as a miner and the new couple moved into a

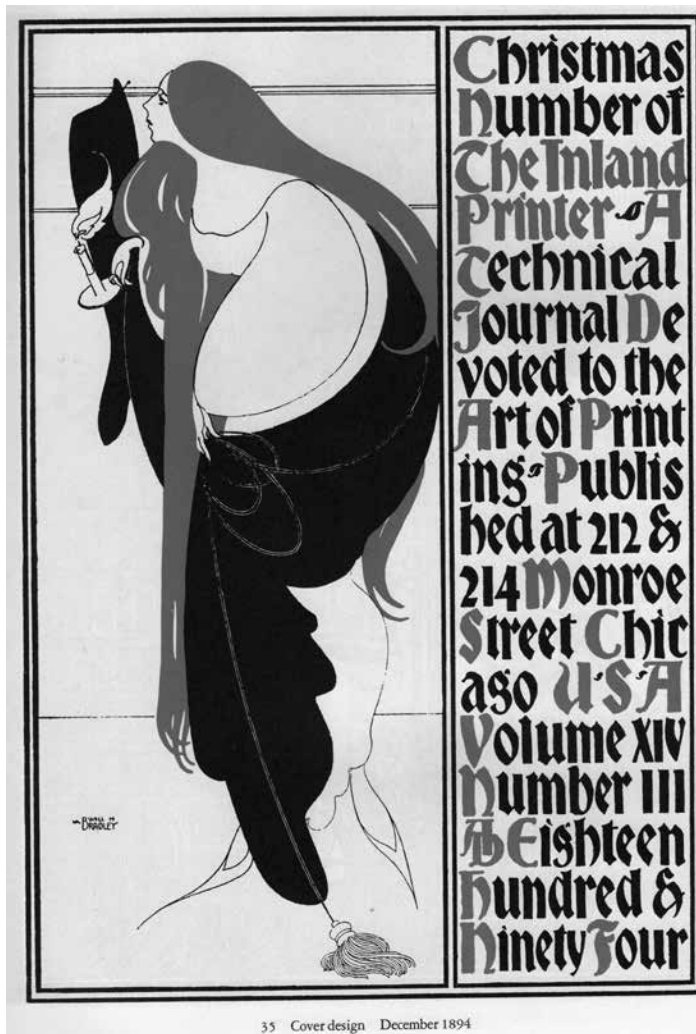
home located at the east end of the Cleveland location, Ishpeming. Will, who liked and respected Mr. Austin, boarded with his mother and new step-father. Rowland Austin, Will's half-brother, was born on September 16, 1883. Twenty-two years later, on September 14, 1905, Rowland married Ida Johanna Wilson, a Negaunee girl whose father worked as a miner. The Austin family, including Rowland and Ida and their 5 children will live at the home in the Cleveland location, later 211 Marquette Street, for many years. Will's mother Sarah lived with her second son in the Cleveland location until her death at the age of 86 on April 22, 1929.

Mr. Newett was happy with Will's work and when he hired a new Printer's Devil (the name "devil" arose as one of their jobs was to mix the printing ink, "Devils" skin invariably became stained black by the ink), Will worked side by side with the Devil learning all he could. By the time he was 16, Will was performing all the necessary tasks of a late Victorian age print shop, and Mr. Newett rewarded him by raising his salary to \$6.00 a week. Will quickly advanced in the print shop and in 1885, when he was 17, Mr. Newett made him a print shop foreman and raised his salary to \$15.00 a week, a man's wages.

Will has a little time now to create his own designs, use his artistic talent for local posters. One such poster draws the attention of a well-known landscape painter from Chicago, Frank Bromley. Mr. Bromley asks around for the name of the artist and was directed to Will at the Iron Agitator. Mr. Bromley inquired as to Will's plans and was told that he planned to go back to Boston to study art. He suggested Will stop by Chicago on his way and see him, perhaps he could help him. In the fall of 1885, having saved \$80 for the trip, Will is determined to begin his grand adventure, bids goodbye to his family, tells his sweetheart Alice Gray that he will be back for her, and takes the train to Chicago.

Once in Chicago, Will finds the studio of Frank Bromley and was introduced to several of his friends where Will might further his knowledge of art and design. Will chooses the Rand McNally firm on Monroe Street and is put to work engraving wood-blocks in the designing and engraving department. Will soon discovers that apprentices receive no pay. After several weeks of engraving, Will also discovered that the designers at Rand McNally never seem to engrave their own wood-blocks, and that the engravers never did any designing. Already short on funds and realizing he has no choice, and not happy with the circumstances at Rand McNally, Will has just enough money left to pay for a second-class ticket back to Ishpeming. Mr. Newitt is glad to see him and re-hires him at the Iron Agitator print shop.

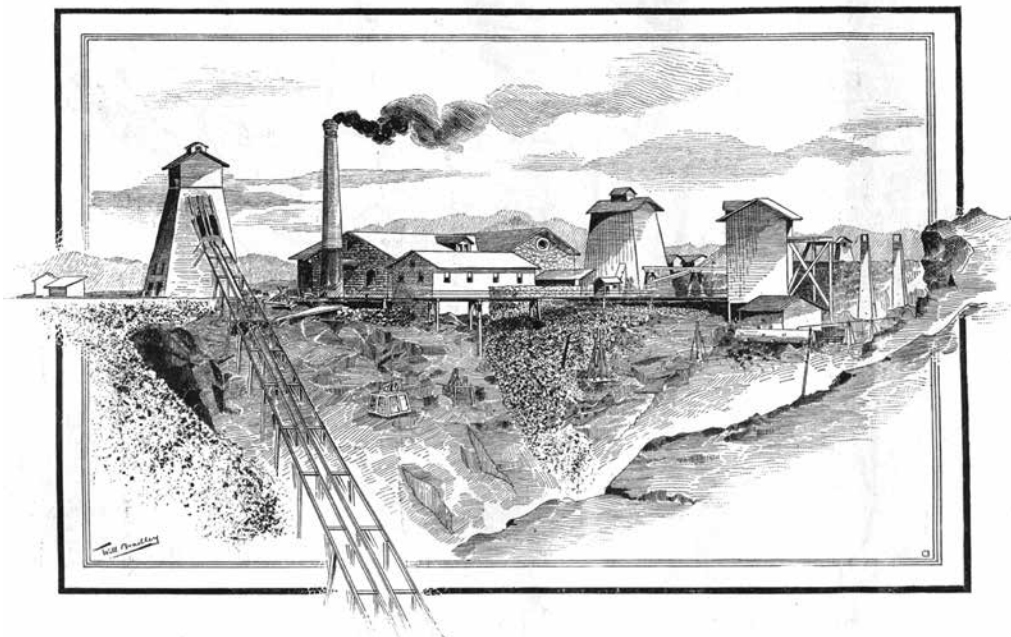
It is now late summer 1886, Mr. Newitt's newspaper is now called the Iron Ore, Will has turned 18 and his intended, Alice Gray, is working as a teacher at the



**Cover of the Christmas 1894 issue of the Inland Printer Journal by Will Bradley with a new type face designed by Will and licensed as the Bradley Type in 1895**

Division Street School only a few blocks from the Iron Ore building. Soon after Will returned to Ishpeming from Chicago he received a letter from his old boss at Rand McNally who realizing his mistake, offered Will a job with wages if he would return. Having saved another \$60 for a second trip to Chicago, Will had to make a decision as Mr. Newitt had offered him a partnership in the Iron Ore newspaper when he reached 20 years of age if he remained. The dream of studying art, becoming a designer and graphic artist made the choice for him. By the fall 1886 he was back in Chicago working for Rand McNally. By 1888, Will had established himself in the printing business in Chicago. On one of his trips back to Ishpeming to see his mother and Alice Gray, Will kept his promise and married Alice on August 29, 1888. Back in Chicago, children soon arrived with Fern Alice, their first-born daughter, on July 17, 1889, followed by two sons, Willie Rowland in 1893 and Paul Woodward in 1895.

Beginning in 1886, Will designed several mastheads for the Iron Ore newspaper, the last of which was still



VIEW SHOWING A PORTION OF THE LAKE SUPERIOR MINE.

in use for the Ishpeming Centennial edition in 1954. During Will's trips back to Ishpeming from Chicago in 1888, Will kept busy with pen and ink, sketching many homes, mines and businesses in Ishpeming. Many of these sketches appeared in the special illustrated January 1, 1889 issue of the Iron Ore newspaper.

Will worked for wages for a few years in Chicago, eventually his freelance work began to pay so he formed his own art studio on the second floor of the same building that housed a publisher of fine books, Way & Williams. By 1893 Will has moved his art studio to the new 16 story Monadnock building in the Loop and he has an exhibit of his work at the World's Fair. Will begins illustrating books in 1894 while still in Chicago. After his third child is born December of 1895, Will moves his young family to Springfield, Massachusetts. Believing he is ready to manage a printing business, edit and publish an art magazine while still designing magazine covers and posters, Will launched the Wayside Press and published his first periodical, *Bradley: His Book*, in May 1896. Will described his new publication as: "a little magazine of interesting reading, interspersed with various bits of art, and privately printed at the Wayside Press." In his short autobiography, Will explains the origin of the name "The Wayside Press" "I had worked in Ishpeming and Chicago so as to earn money to take me back to Boston where I hoped to study and become an artist. I had always thought of printing as being along the wayside to the achieving of my ambition. And I chose a dandelion leaf as my device because the dandelion is a wayside growth."

At the age of 28, even with his extensive experience in the printing business, Will was ill-equipped to handle the financial side of his business venture. With the stress and fatigue from long hours at the Wayside Press, Will broke under the strain and had to go away

for a complete rest. In 1898, Will made the decision to sell the Wayside Press to John Wilson & Son, where it was folded into The University Press of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The University Press so valued Will's input and artistic talent that they convinced him to stay on for a couple more years, unhappy with his new circumstances Will spilt with the organization in 1900.

Along with designing book covers and internal illustrations for many books, Will began writing and illustrating children's books himself, including *Peter Poodle*, *Toy Maker to the King*, published in 1906 by Dodd, Mead & Company, for which he received a \$1,000 advance on royalties, and *The Wonderbox Stories*,

first published serially in the St. Nicolas Magazine and then in book form by The Century Company in 1916. Will also wrote a novel, *Launcelot & the Ladies*, published by Harper & Brothers in 1927.

After the split with the University Press of Cambridge, Will needed to step up his free-lance work once again to support his growing family. He rented a studio on Thirty-Second street in New York City and began designing and illustrating magazines, books, advertisements and posters. Will would travel by train back to his family in Springfield for long weekends. By the end of 1903, Will built his family a three story, 14 room home in Concord, Massachusetts, along with a small art studio next door. Beginning in 1907, Will was hired by Collier's Magazine as the art editor and worked full time for the magazine for three years. Will completely revised the layout of Collier's Magazine for which he received wide spread acclaim. By 1910 the Bradley family had moved to the metropolitan New York City area and settled across the river in Short Hills, New Jersey where they would stay for the next thirty plus years. Will's artwork was highly sought after and working independently, supplied creations for Ladies' Home Journal and Colliers Magazine. Occupying a studio on the 45th floor of the new Metropolitan Life Insurance Tower in Manhattan, Will handled the art editorship for six magazines, Good Housekeeping, Metropolitan, Success, Pearson's, Century and the National Weekly.

In 1914, William Randolph Hearst had great success with the silent film series, *The Perils of Pauline*. In 1915 Mr. Hearst asked Will to take over the art supervision of his next 15-episode serial drama, *Patria*, starring Irene Castle. Will agreed and worked full time on the motion picture episodes until the release of the serial in November, 1916. Will moved on to write,

produce and direct his own motion pictures including Bitter Fruit in 1920, Moongold and The Tame Cat in 1921. After Will's independent motion picture venture, he returned to work for Mr. Hearst and until 1930, supervised the art editorship for all Hearst media business ventures including magazines, newspapers and motion pictures. This included a business trip for Will and Alice to Europe in 1924. In 1930, at the age of 62, Will left working full time for the Hearst empire and for the next few years, at his leisure, contributed his talents to many commercial art projects. In 1941, Will and Alice began spending winters in Pasadena, California.

Will and Alice's oldest son, William Rowland Bradley, at the age of 52, preceded them in death in November 1945 in Florida. William Rowland was a veteran of World War I, mustering in as a private in June 1917 and mustering out as a sergeant in the Military Police in April 1919, serving in Europe during the war. William Rowland married (Loyola) but never had children. Will and Alice's second son, Paul Woodward Bradley, also served in World War I from October 1917 to April 1919 and fought in many campaigns in France. Paul Woodward was wounded in combat in 1918 and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the U. S. Army's second highest military decoration for soldiers who display extraordinary heroism in combat. Paul Woodward married (Mildred) and had two children, Paul and Nancy. On March 5, 1981 Paul Woodward died at the age of 86 in San Mateo, California.

Will and Alice's oldest child, Fern Alice, lived a somewhat bohemian lifestyle, residing with her parents until the 1920's when she lived in various locations in Manhattan, including Fifth avenue and employing a maid. Fern also joined other young artistic American's and experienced life in Paris, France during the roaring twenties. Fern recorded her occupation at different times as a "decorator" and "dress designer". In 1943, at the age of 54, Fern married well known Impressionist painter Edward Dufner who was 17 years her senior. After 14 years of marriage, Edward died at the age of 86 in 1957 in New Jersey. Soon after, Fern retired to San Diego, California, and was very active in the artistic community of the city. Fern died at the age of 91 in November, 1980.

Will's life partner, the little girl with the cute pig-tails, who had loved and supported her husband in all of his endeavors, left his side on December 3, 1951 at the age of 84. Will was shattered by Alice's death and began spending more time with his daughter Fern and her husband in Short Hills, New Jersey. After Fern's husband died, Will and Fern returned to southern California where Will remained until his death on January 25, 1962 at the age of 93.

Will never forgot his humble beginnings in Ishpeming, visiting his family often and submitting a few ar-

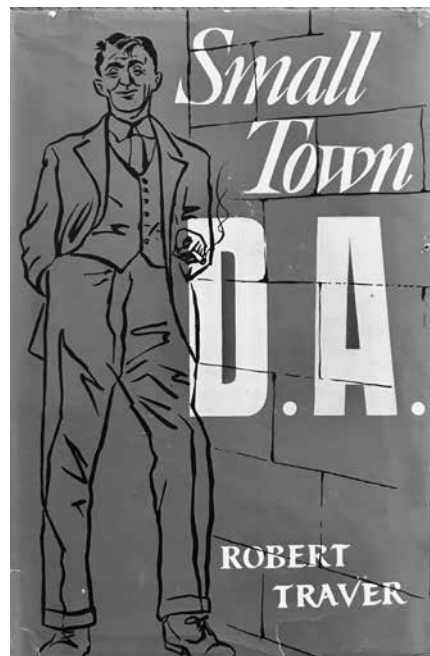
ticles through the years to the Iron Ore newspaper. On one such trip in 1925, Will was interested in his niece's plans for a career as she had just begun taking classes at the Normal School (NMU) in Marquette. His niece, Dorothy Ida Austin, told her uncle that she wanted to study music. With money for school not a certainty, Will told Dorothy "You go and fix up your courses, and take whatever you want, I'll see that you get your money." With her uncles help and encouragement, Dorothy graduated in 1927. Dorothy soon began teaching music and kindergarten at the National Mine school. Dorothy met and fell in love with another teacher at the National Mine school, Patrick Gleason. Dorothy and Patrick married on June 21, 1937 in Le Sueur, Minnesota and both taught at the National Mine school until they retired many years later. Chris Gleason, one of the Ishpeming Area Historical Society's board members, happens be the grandson of Dorothy and Patrick, which would make Will Bradley his great-great uncle.

## Confessions of an ex-D.A.

Third in a series concerning Robert Traver's (John Voelker) Books

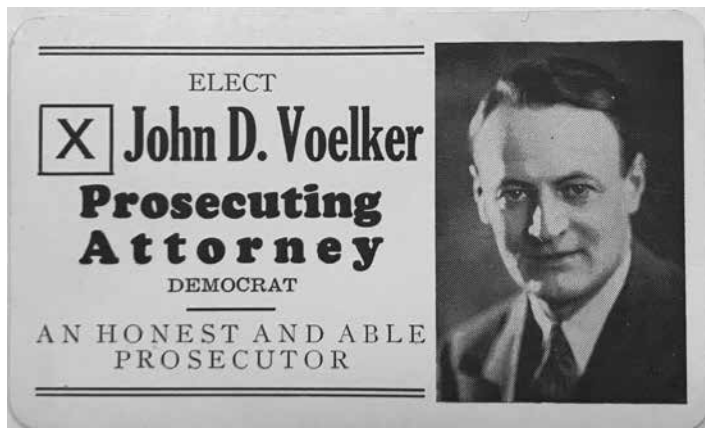
By David Lee White, IAHS Board Member

After 14 successful years as the Marquette County Prosecutor, John Donaldson Voelker was out of a job. John lost his election for District Attorney in November 1950 and his private practice was struggling. In 1951, John's wife Grace began contributing financially to keep her family afloat by taking a job with the Jones & Laughlin Company who had a contract with the Atomic Energy Commission to hunt for Uranium.



Front cover of first edition dust wrapper

In a letter dated February 6, 1951 addressed to William Targ of World Publishing Company, John wrote in a postscript "Waiting and waiting for trout season I have lately developed some dim notions of writing a sequel to 'Troubleshooter' tentatively entitled 'Confessions of an Ex-D.A.' The range is beautiful to contemplate..... But perhaps we'd better see what happens to 'Danny'. In the meantime, I'll keep it simmering on



the back of my Franklin stove. I've just done a D. A. story on a long shot speculation for the Post that should make a good nucleus. Wat you men tink? J.D.V." William Targ replied three days later telling John that "Your proposed 'Confessions of an Ex-D.A.' is darned intriguing." Targ asked John to keep him advised on his progress with the new book and also on the possible inclusion of his D.A. story in the Post. The Post rejected the D. A. story in short order so John sent it on to Harper's magazine for their consideration. In a postscript to a letter dated April 9, 1951 to William Targ John wrote "Harper's Magazine just now returned my 'excellent' D. A. piece which they held since February. I think I'll go out and get drunk. Close don't count – that's why I quit dancing. Now you cheer me up. Jno."

John included the D. A. short story in a letter to William Targ dated May 19, 1951 and wrote "Here's my copy of that near miss at Harper's Magazine, 'The Drunk Driver.' I send it to you for any ideas you may have and also to show you one of the proposed chapters of the new D. A. Book I have sizzling..." Targ returned the piece on June 4, 1951 with the following comment "Am returning herewith the manuscript you sent me in Cleveland, 'The Drunk Driver'. Frankly – and I am sure you want me to be frank – I don't find it too impressive..." Atlantic Monthly who had published a story John wrote about prospecting uranium in the June 1951 issue also rejected "The Drunk Driver" so John sent it on to Collier's Magazine, which was eventually returned without publication. In a letter dated August 3, 1951 John informed World Publishing Company editor Jim Putnam, that "Trout fishing has been good this summer. I go every evening and all-day weekends." Allowing the trout to recover, John found time on weekdays to continue writing chapters for his new D. A. book.

On November 2, 1951, in an effort to convince The World Publishing Company to advance him a grand, he sent William Targ ten chapters of the new D. A. book to review. John ended the letter that accompanied the ten chapters with "If you can't advance me the grand, please give me the word fast and straight, as I know you will. I am going to write the book come hell or high wa-

ter, but there is a limit even to my capacity to ignore the economic pressures of paying the butcher and baker." As an afterthought, three days later John wrote William Targ advising him "I think it is only honorable to warn you that I cannot undertake to purchase 3,000 copies of the new book", as he had done with Danny and the Boys. That is too damn many copies, Bill. I will agree to buy 1,000 copies provided that you will give me six months to pay for them." Jim Putnam, World Publishing Company editor wrote John on November 9, 1951 informing John that he had read the manuscript for the D. A. Book and included some suggestions concerning revisions. Jim also let John know that William Targ had just left for a 10-day Florida vacation without reading the manuscript so it would be a while before he would hear a verdict.

John wrote back to Jim on November 13 thanking him for the suggestions. John also let Jim know that he had no additional chapters to send him as he had been busy at the office and due to Grace being ill. John then added "In the meantime I am taking off for the woods for a few days deer hunting. I do not shoot deer but I can at least get the hell away from the phone for a few days and perhaps write a chapter or two." On November 30, back from the woods, John wrote Jim Putnam again with a gentle hint World needed to make a decision "I enclose the final draft of 'The Lying Witness' (I had sent you the rough draft) and the rough draft of a new chapter, 'Willie the Weeper.' If I don't hear favorably from you soon, I will write my future chapters from a cell." On December 11, 1951, Jim Putnam called John and gave him the bad news, World would not be adding Confessions of an ex-D. A. to their list. John received the returned manuscript on December 18, 1951.

John sent the returned manuscript on to Marshall Best at The Viking Press, the publisher of his first book Troubleshooter. John had high hopes that Viking would publish the sequel to a book that Viking referred to as "successful", but in a letter dated January 23, 1952, Marshall Best reported that after "four readings here, two by readers who knew Troubleshooter, and two by readers who didn't", "we have reluctantly decided not to publish Confessions of a D. A." Two days later, John replied to the Viking rejection with an offer that appears not in his best interest. "If you'll take on 'Confessions' I'll buy 1,500 copies outright from you on publication day. I'll also withdraw my request for an advance. You in return must give me 6 months from P-day to pay you." John's letter to Viking was full of a trial lawyer's persuasion. John used emotion and appeal to reason in an effort to get Viking to take on his new book. John even offered to place a bet with Viking (a quart of whiskey, winner's choice) that if a publisher brought out the book before the 1952 election, "...the book will place on the New York Times books bestseller list within 3

months of publication.” On January 30, 1952 John received a telegram addressed to his office in the Woolworth Building, Ishpeming, Michigan “*Answer still regretfully no – Marshall Best.*”

The following day John sent the manuscript on to The Atlantic Press, after 6 weeks Atlantic sent a rejection letter dated March 13, 1952 with apologies and some advice. The advice from Mr. Dudley Cloud included “*you occasionally strain too hard to be funny, ...you are not writing confessions, but are aiming more at the current interest in scandals and prosecutions, so that the title is misleading and should be changed.*” Mr. cloud also suggested that the book was too long, that John should cut it down to the best stories and keep it under 70,000 words. John took the advice and changed the title to Mister District Attorney and sent the manuscript to Random House on April 8, 1952. John again made the offer to purchase 1,500 copies and asked the publisher to ask their salesman “*to lay off the Upper Peninsula.*” A month later Random answered negatively saying the stories were too regional and while thanking John for his offer to purchase 1,500 copies, “*...nevertheless, with publishing costs what they are today, they would not go very far toward underwriting our investment.*”

While John was waiting to hear from yet another publisher regarding his new book, happenstance dropped into his lap an event that would change his life forever. In early August 1952, John was retained for his first big criminal defense case. John was to represent Lt. Coleman A. Peterson who was charged with the murder of Maurice (Mike) Chenoweth. Lt. Peterson believed Mike Chenoweth had raped and beaten his wife, Charlotte. Before John agreed to defend Peterson, he interviewed both husband and wife for hours. After Charlotte passed a lie detector test, John was convinced she was telling the truth and agreed to defend her husband. Any public sentiment against Lt. Peterson took a hit when the Marquette based newspaper, The Mining



Journal, ran a news story on Monday, August 4, 1952, with a bold headline “**Lie Detector Tests Show Mrs. Peterson Telling Truth, State Police Officer**

**Charlotte Peterson from the August 8, 1952 issue of the Mining Journal newspaper, before the trial**

**says.**” The story went on to disclose that Mrs. Peterson had passed the polygraph test performed by Lt. Wilbur Peterman of Lansing headquarters. On Friday, August 8, 1952, The Mining Journal ran a photograph of Mrs. Peterson showing dark bruises under her eyes with the bold headline “**Photo Shows Assault Evidence.**” The trial of Lt. Colman A. Peterson, charged with first degree murder, began on Monday, September 15, 1952. Closing arguments were heard the following Monday morning, September 22, 1952, after only 4 to 5 hours of deliberation, including 1 hour for dinner, the 13-member jury found Lt. Peterson “not guilty by reason of insanity.”

Recovered from the mental and physical exhaustion of his first big criminal defense trial, John sent the manuscript for Mister District Attorney to Thomas Y. Crowell Company on November 14, 1952 and received a rejection along with the manuscript two weeks later. December 12, 1952 saw the manuscript traveling to J. B. Lippincott Company in Philadelphia. Other than a confirmation of receipt, Lippincott did not reply until February 9, 1953. J. B. Lippincott expressed interest, but had reservations as “*some of them (the stories) put us off because of the manner of the telling – as, for instance, the rape cases.*” Lynn Carrick, Director of the J. B. Lippincott New York office went on to say “*We feel that the whole book would be greatly improved if you reworked it to preserve a soberer attitude more in accord with the essentially dignified subject of law enforcement. Thus, without squeezing out the juice which is essential to your method, the D. A. would come through as a character more likely to impress the reader favorably.*”

In a letter dated February 16, 1953, John thanked Lynn Carrick for his advice and in part stated “*So, I have resolved to revise this book from stem to gudgeon. Without making him stuffy (heaven forbid) I am going to try to make my D. A. a fellow who is more humbly aware not only of the inevitable undercurrent of tragedy in his job, but also of the irresistible and wonderful surge of ‘humanity’.*” John revised the forward and the first two chapters and sent them to Lynn Carrick on February 26, 1953. John informed Mr. Carrick that while he had not materially changed the chapters, he had changed the narrative attitude of the chapters to appear less flippant and more sober. Lippincott was not satisfied with the revisions John made and wanted the stories even more serious. John was not willing to revise his D.A. stories to the point of sobriety so by mid-April John and Lippincott parted ways.

Mister District Attorney moved on, went through the hands of the editors at Alfred A. Knopf and was quickly rejected. On April 20, 1953 John sent the well-read manuscript to E. P. Dutton in New York. Little did John know that with mailing the manuscript to E. P.

Dutton he would finally get the manuscript published, but more importantly, he would begin the process of developing a lasting professional relationship with an editor, an editor who would become a close personal friend, an editor who was fundamental in helping him become a successful author.

Sherman Baker, editor with E. P. Dutton publishing company, wrote John on June 24, 1953 advising him that he personally liked the manuscript for Mister District Attorney and that he would meet with the Editorial Board in the near future where a decision would be made regarding publication. Never sitting still, in late May 1953, John finished the first draft of a book involving his passion for fishing with the title Trout Madness. In June and July, 1953, the manuscript for Trout Madness went through the hands of J. B. Lippincott Company and The Atlantic Press and quickly rejected. While waiting for a decision on Mister District Attorney, John broached the subject of Trout Madness with Sherman Baker and sent him the manuscript for review along with a letter dated July 29, 1953.

A telegram dated August 19, 1953 brought John the good news that the editorial board at E. P. Dutton had accepted Mister District Attorney for publication in 1954. Acting on a suggestion John had made in an effort to get his book published, Sherman Baker outlined the details of the contract that required John to forgo the royalties on the first 5,000 copies sold, said funds would be added to the advertising budget. Both John and Sherman agreed to put the manuscript for Trout Madness, still in Sherman's hands, on ice until the work on the publication of Mister District Attorney was completed. The manuscript for Mister District Attorney was about 120,000 words and would require a \$3.50 price tag. In a letter to John dated August 26, 1953, Sherman suggested that a reduction of about 30,000 words by eliminating the weaker chapters and allowing a \$3.00 price tag, would not only sell more books, it would produce a better book. Sherman also advised John in the same letter that the title should be changed as "'Mr. District Attorney' produces a rather sour apple expression every time I mention it." Two days later John replied with "Dear Sherman: Thanks for your airmail letter of the 26th. I shall ponder the things in it over a trouty weekend and then write you."

John wrote back concerning which chapters he thought they could eliminate and sent more than 50 possible titles for Sherman's consideration, none of them the eventual title when published. The last paragraph of a letter addressed to Sherman Baker dated September 9, 1953 illustrates the beginning of a very important relationship in John's life "Your friendly interest in what I may next write seems to have stimulated me. I lately find myself blocking out the main characters while shaving, making cryptic little notes, beginning to see a

*small gleam of light at the end of a long empty corridor. Fishing ends this Sunday and then I go to work. This thing is so big it kind of scares me."*

On November 17, 1953, John informed Sherman Baker that he had corrected, revised and deleted eight chapters which amounted to around 30,000 words from the Mister District Attorney manuscript. John also gave the manuscript the new working title Manhunter, a title that Sherman previously told John he liked. Sherman Baker had kept the manuscript for Trout Madness as he wanted to read it. In a letter to Sherman dated November 17, 1953, John requested the manuscript be returned if Sherman was done with it as he wanted to send it to a new publisher. Sherman wrote back on November 27, 1953 and suggested that if John had no corrections planned, he could send the manuscript for Trout Madness on to "Henry Holt & Company, who are now the publishers of *Field and Stream* magazine." In a letter dated December 2, 1953, John agreed and asked Sherman to forward the manuscript on to Henry Holt and Company saying "I have little faith that anyone will ever take this book. It is at once too advanced and too light-hearted." The Trout Madness manuscript arrived back on John's desk in January 1954 with a rejection notice from Henry Holt & Company. In a letter dated January 6, 1954, John told Sherman that he had started to write his new novel, the novel that "kind of scares me."

In a reply to a letter John wrote to Sherman Baker on February 22, 1954, his new friend and editor at E. P. Dutton informed him "Hate to have to break bad news but Dutton's and I have come to a parting of the ways. I only wish I were going to be here to see your book published and help it on its way. It is a real good job John, and I hope it gets the press and sale it deserves. I will do what I can for the next thirty days or so. It has been great fun to work with you and I have every confidence in your future as a writer." A bit stunned, John replied to the news on March 2, 1954. John told Sherman that he was shocked and dismayed, and followed with "I can only hope that the move will work out to make you happier if not wealthier, though I wish you much of both." John gave Sherman credit for convincing Dutton to publish his book and then touchingly, expressed his feelings concerning the situation "The impersonality of modern publishing may be its greatest curse, its own Iron Curtain, and I only hope that your great warmth and ability will not be lost to it. You have renewed one man's desire to write and bolstered his faith in his ability to do so. Not merely because you took my book, though that is important, but because you did it so quietly and in your own indefinably encouraging way. I shall never forget it. If the little book hits you must surely come out here fishing, postpaid. In the meantime, we must keep in touch."

Sherman Baker wrote John on March 15, 1954, in-



forming him of decisions made in a promotion meeting concerning his book. E. P. Dutton wanted to publish the new book on July 29, 1954 at a price of \$3.00 with a first edition of 5,000 copies. The advertising budget would be \$2,500, including John's royalties from the first 5,000 copies sold. To John's dismay, the consensus was that Manhunter did not do justice to the book and in Dutton's opinion "*is a false arrest that can be very irritating to the reader.*" E. P. Dutton wanted to use I Was a District Attorney for the title, a title John resisted with a passion. Nicholas Wreden, E. P. Dutton Vice President, wrote John on March 31, 1954 suggesting a hopeful compromise for the title, Small Town D. A. John was not enthusiastic about this new title but relented in a telegram he sent to Mr. Wreden on April 8, 1954 "*Small Town D. A. throws in the sponge, the towel, the two judges, the ring doctor and an unsuspecting bookie. It's a clean knockout. Congratulations.*"

In a letter dated April 28, 1954, John told his friend Sherman Baker that the writing on his new novel The Trial was "*in a dead stall – instead I'm running for congress (honest Injun) and if I don't look out, I might even make it.*" John's run for congress on the Democratic ticket was announced on the front page of the April 22, 1954 issue of the Mining Journal newspaper. The Democratic primary would be held on August 3, 1954. John's plan was to ignore his Democratic opponent, Frank Hook from Ironwood, and concentrate his attacks on the Republican incumbent, John Bennett from Ontonagon. John won the Democratic primary in Marquette County by a wide margin, 2,564 votes to 796 votes for Frank Hook. Unfortunately, John lost the other 7 counties in Michigan's 12th congressional district. The vote count totaled 9,305 votes for Hook and 6,156 votes for Voelker. Frank Hook lost to the Republican John Bennett in the November general election.

The publication date for Small Town D. A. was slated for July 28, 1954. In a letter to the editorial staff of E. P. Dutton & Co. dated June 7, 1954, John requested a loan of 500 to 1,000 copies of his new book so he could stock "*the entrepreneurs of aspirin and assorted rubber goods who pass as book dealers around here.*" John informed Dutton that the "*town of Ishpeming is celebrating its centennial the week commencing July 25th (1954). It is already known that many thousands of former residents will attend the week-long homecoming (The taverns are already groaning with Guckenheim.) It occurs to me that this would be a good time and place to peddle a whole raft of my new book.*" The E. P. Dutton & Co. publicity director, Elliott Graham responded to John's letter on June 9, 1954. Mr. Graham liked John's plan and suggested "*a special publication date of July 25th for Ishpeming.*" Mr. Graham informed John in a letter dated June 16, 1954 that they would like to send John 750 copies of the new book

on a consignment basis and at a discount of 40%. In a letter dated July 7, 1954 to Elliott Graham, John wrote "*I was deep in the brambles campaigning for Congress when 22 parcel post men armed with 22 packages of Small Town D. A. emerged from the jack pines and locust fashion, like a group of native bearers, wound their way up to the second floor of the Woolworth Tower and dumped their burdens in the middle of my office floor. This is a rather circuitous way of telling you that the books came and that I'm feeling a little overpowered by it all.*" John now owed E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1,350.00 plus \$36.16 post.

At Elliott Graham's request as to how well the book was selling in Ishpeming, John wrote on August 2, 1954 "*People up here rave about the new book 'simply out of this world,' 'far and away your best,' etc., etc. – and then proceed to borrow their neighbor's copy. Not many more than 300 copies have been sold, a situation I blame on so damn many other week-long Centennial distractions. Lack of publicity is certainly not the explanation. I was toastmaster at the Governor's (G. Mennen Williams) Dinner last Tuesday evening and got him on his feet by reading to the crowd the story of the prison break he starred in (p. 104), and then presented him with an inscribed copy. This portion was broadcast. We then posed for a series of photographs together, which were flown to Detroit, and next day the Mining Journal carried a front-page photo of the Guv., Dr. Glenn Seaborg, the famous nuclear scientist who was born here, and Dear John.*" On August 6, 1954 John mailed a check for \$635.56 to E. P. Dutton & Co. for 333 of the books sold in Ishpeming along with the cost of the parcel post.

In a reply to a letter from Elliott Graham of Dutton on August 12, 1954 John thanked him for continuing to send him copies of the favorable reviews for the new book and in reply to a query about how he was handling the election loss John wrote "*Let me assure you that I have already grown scar tissue over that late unpleasantness. Oddly enough, my stock seems even to have gone up in some quarters. In fact, last night the Democratic chairman for the state phoned me that he and the Governor and some other wheels wanted to know if I would accept the Democratic nomination for Attorney General of the state at the state convention which convenes tomorrow. I thanked the chairman for his flattering offer, etc., and respectfully declined. I felt and feel no call to wallow in state politics, and I'd sooner live in a coal mine than in Lansing.*"

The venerable book reviewer of the New York Times, Orville Prescott, wrote an enthusiastic review of John's new book in the August 24, 1954 issue. The review was long and two columns wide, in part it read "*Nearly ten years ago Mr. Traver wrote a robust, funny and delightful book about his adventures as a prosecut-*

ing attorney in the U.P. called Troubleshooter. Now he has written a similar and even better book called Small Town D. A. I would not miss it if I were you, not if you like tall stories, lusty anecdotes, mildly ribald humor and the perpetual drama of the law's enforcement." In a letter to his friend Sherman Baker dated August 27, 1954, John wrote "Orville Prescott went all-out for the book in the issue for Tuesday, August 24. I have rarely read serious reviews of any book that were more favorable, and I am simply walking around in a daze over his review of mine. Incidentally he picked out for special mention some of the stories that I recall were among your favorites."

Nationally, sales of John's new book may have slowed but by May 1955, John had sold the remaining copies all his initial consignment of 750 copies of Small Town D. A. and paid off his debt to E. P. Dutton.

After several years of working in different aspects of the publishing business, on July 11, 1955, John's friend and editor Sherman Baker informed him that he had landed a job working as an editor for the relatively newly established publishing house, St. Martin's Press. Sherman immediately began asking John how his new novel The Trial was coming along. John had begun writing his new novel in early January 1954 and wrote Sherman on July 14, 1955 "Again, I have taken up the novel, slowly, slowly, and it may be that this winter, out of sheer boredom, I will try to pin down two percent of my dream on paper. A good story teller must not only have a good story to tell, and possess some art and facility at telling it, but most of all must himself believe that his story is worth telling. It is this last that mutes so many lyres; the lack of that supreme ego that seduces a man into thinking that anything he has to say is or could be of the slightest goddam consequence."

The first three months after publication (July 29, 1954) saw 3,652 copies of Small Town D. A. sold. John received a letter dated January 10, 1957 from E. P. Dutton advising him that the sales of his book had fallen off to the point that they saw no point in ordering a new printing. By February 1957, the first edition that consisted of 5,000 copies of Small Town D. A. was out of print. The first edition is distinguished by the date "1954", printed at the bottom of the title page and the statement "First Edition", printed on the copyright page. There is also an "EPD" logo in a small black triangle at the bottom right of the front cover. The price of \$3.00 is printed at the bottom right of the front flap of the first edition dust wrapper.

With the publication of John's fourth book, Anatomy of a Murder on January 6, 1958, E. P. Dutton brought out a second printing of Small Town D. A. near the end of January, 1958. The second printing consisted of 1,000 copies. By April 30, 1958, 476 copies of the second printing had sold. By April 30, 1960, a total

of 890 copies had sold. The second printing of Small Town D. A. is distinguished from the first edition by having the date "1954" dropped from the title page and the "First Edition" statement dropped from the copyright page. The "EPD" logo was also dropped from the front cloth cover. The second printing dust wrapper is distinguished from the first edition dust wrapper with the raised price of \$3.50 printed at the bottom right of the front flap. The blurb "Author of Anatomy of a Murder" also appears on the front cover of the dust wrapper under the author's name and the E. P. Dutton name and address was added to the bottom of the rear cover. A short portion of Orville Prescott's (New York Times) review of Anatomy of a Murder, where Small Town D. A. was mentioned was added inside a box to the top of the front flap of the dust wrapper.

E. P. Dutton informed John in a letter dated March 20, 1958 that they had contracted with Fawcett Publications for a paperback reprint of Small Town D. A. Fawcett Publications paid \$9,500 for the rights to publish, half of which would find its way to John in Ishpeming. The Crest Book paperback edition of Small Town D. A., a revised edition with a slightly risqué cover, was published by Fawcett Publications in August 1958 and sold for 35 cents.

E. P. Dutton sold the rights for three contemporary magazine condensations of Small Town D.A. These included the November 1954 issue of Coronet titled I Was the Law, the February 1955 issue of Omnibook titled Small Town D. A., and the September 1958 issue of Cavalier titled A Lawyer's Confession.

In what appears to be an effort to retain their rights to Small Town D. A., E. P. Dutton published a third printing in hardcover in June 1964. The third printing consisted of 1,000 copies of which it appears only 383 copies sold as 617 copies were remaindered by E. P. Dutton by April 30, 1970. The third printing was initially sold for \$4.50 and at some point, before it went out-of-print, sold for \$4.95. The third printing is distinguished from the two earlier hardcover printings by the statement "Third Printing, June 1964" on the copyright page. The third printing dust wrapper is distinguished from the earlier printings by the presence of the blurb "Author of Anatomy of a Murder" on the front cover below the author's name and the lack of E. P. Dutton's name and address at the bottom of the rear cover. It is assumed that the price located at the bottom right of the front flap would reflect the higher price of \$4.50 or \$4.95 (my copy is price clipped).

The next installment of the Voelker narrative bibliography that is planned for the summer newsletter will be part one of John's fourth book, a novel he initially called The Trail, when published Anatomy of a Murder.

## Volunteers needed at the Museum

Do you have a few hours to spare, not necessarily every week, but even once a month during the summer? Would you like to spend a pleasant afternoon surrounded by Ishpeming history? If so, please contact us and volunteer as a host at the Ishpeming Area Historical Museum. Anyone interested in helping to preserve the history of our town is welcome. We offer training for those interested in becoming a volunteer. If you are interested, please contact David Aeh at the Main Street Antique Mall, 121 South Main Street, Ishpeming, Michigan 49849. Phone 906-486-8680.

**Our newsletter is sponsored in part by  
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and our members.**

## Please become a member or renew your membership

While we do several fundraisers throughout the year, our memberships are the backbone of the historical society. Through yearly and lifetime memberships, we keep the doors open. We pay for insurance and memberships in organizations such as the Historical Society of Michigan, the Greater Ishpeming Chamber of Commerce and more. We pay for our newsletter and the flyers to help us publicize our events. Those yearly memberships keep us going and they are important to us.

If you are not a member, please consider becoming one. Annual membership is just \$10 per year for an individual. We also have business and family memberships. If you are a member, please renew your membership on a yearly basis. Every membership helps us in our mission of preserving the history of Ishpeming and making it available to everyone. Our membership application is included in this newsletter.

*Thank You!*

## Become a member: Ishpeming Area Historical Society

The Ishpeming Area Historical Society is a 501(c)3 Michigan Non-Profit Organization. Our mission is to promote and encourage a better appreciation for and a sustained interest in the history of the Ishpeming area. Your membership allows us to carry out this mission. (We send out newsletters in the winter and summer)

### Yearly membership (Renewable January 1st)

<input type="checkbox"/> \$5 Student (high school-College)	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional donation _____
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Family (One household)
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Non-Profit Business	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Business
<input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Lifetime Individual or Family,	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Lifetime Business

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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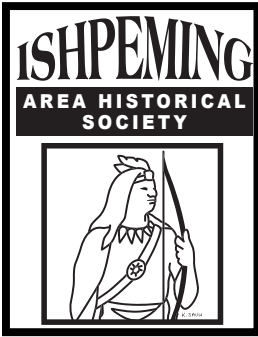
In memory/honor of (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

I do NOT wish my name to be used in any publicity or on a membership plaque.

Is this a  New Membership  Renewal Membership

Is this address my/our year-round address? If not, what months do I/we reside here? \_\_\_\_\_

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Looking south on Main Street, Ishpeming, ca. late 1930's