

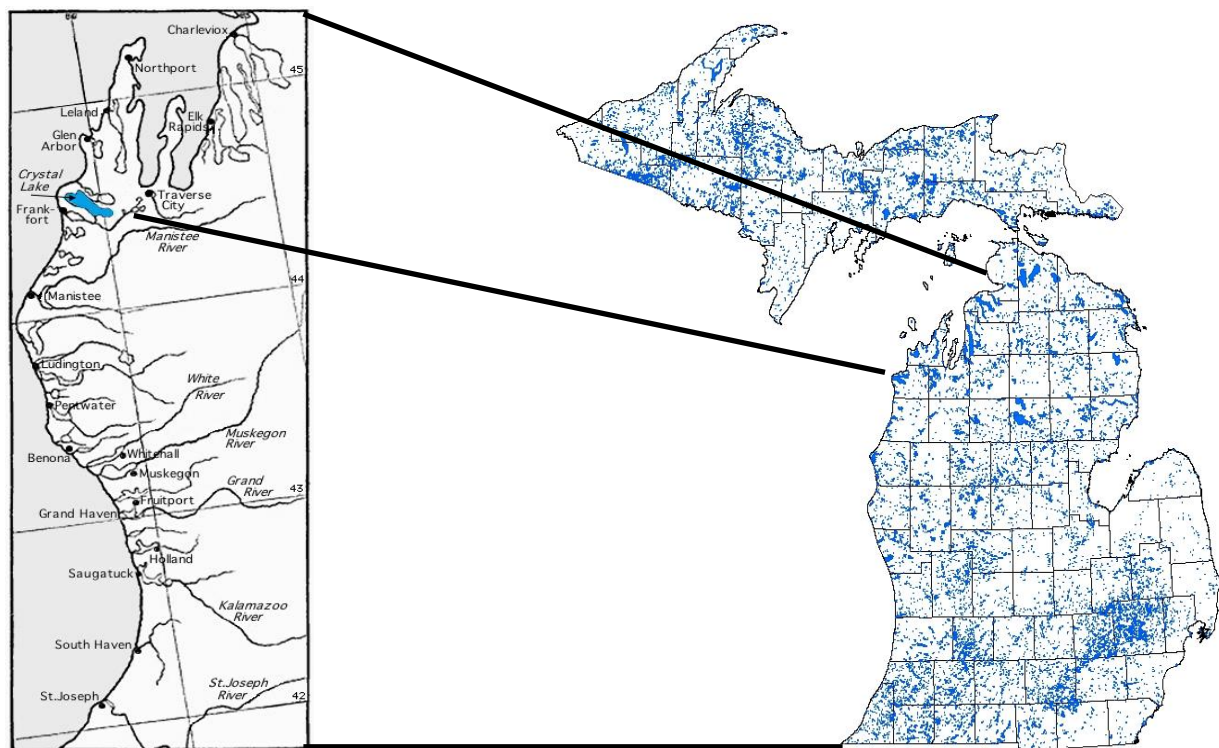
CRYSTALANA

A JOURNAL OF

Historical Reflections and Current Perspectives of Crystal Lake, Its Watershed, & Benzie County, MI.

As compiled by Dr. Stacy Leroy Daniels, a humble saunterer, and
"President *pro tem*, Benzie Co. River Improvement Co., Est. 1873".

Vol. 1, No. 4, 2018.



A Brood of Lakelets

"It is a singular and interesting and most important fact that there is not a stream, however small, emptying into Lake Michigan from the east which does not first discharge its waters into a small lake which communicates almost immediately with Lake Michigan."

"This hydrographic singularity" results in "a real litter of lakelets nestling alongside of the great maternal lake. These baby lakes are bodies of clear water, with clean, sandy shores, and abound in delicate fish." "... - stretched like a string of pearls along the skirt of the peninsula - ..."

-- Alexander Winchell, Sparks from a Geologist's Hammer, S.C. Griggs and Co., 1881, page 230.

Issue Theme: A Brood of Lakelets

Table of Contents

- Historical Reflection - A Brood of Lakelets
- Current Perspective: River Improvements and Harbors of Refuge
- People: Inland Lakes of Michigan (Irving Day Scott)
- Places: My New Home in Northern Michigan (Charles W. Jay)
- Phenomena: Michigania – The Land of the “Great Waters”
- Potpourri: “The Michigan Immigrant’s Song

Prologue

The sun awaits its birth o'er quiet Lake
A glow behind the night, yet to dispense the dark.
The lightening hills, still ghostly, anticipate the dawn
But peace still reigns; no discontent lies within my heart.

And as I stroll along the rippled sands
Peace walks with me – I wait and sigh
For that beckoning voice beneath the ripple of the waves
To tell me, "Be ye still, for God is neigh".

And so, yet lovely Lake, I pour out forth to you
This message from my soul. No longer ache
Forever after me as I depart this life.
Remember calm and stormy inspiration, Crystal Lake.

-- Dr. Stacy Leroy Daniels, 29 Aug 1937 - (), *“The Comedy of Crystal Lake”*, 2015.

"They delved down the mountains and rolled up the hills,
And opened the fountains, and traced out the rills;
Pushing vast moving glaciers adown the broad ways
Of the high polar regions, they scooped out the bays;

And planed off the highlands, and dimpled the face
Of the country with lakelets; and in every place
Poured the transparent flood, until each one was filled
With water as pure as e'er rain-cloud distilled."

-- Hon. Jonathan G. Ramsdell, *Origin of the Grand Traverse Region*, 1884.

"I brood about lakes and lakelets." – "A.J."

Historical Perspective: A Brood of Lakelets

Winchell, A(lexander), *Climate of the Lake Region*, Harper's New Monthly Magazine 43(254), 275-285 (Jul 1871). <http://books.google.com/books?id=lw0wAAAAMAAJ>

"It yet remains to mention a singular, and, one could almost believe, a Providential conformation of the lake shore (Lake Michigan) which greatly enhances its ameliorating influence on climate, and, at the same time, creates important facilities for shipment and transportation of the products of the soil. Any one, looking at on ordinary map of Lake Michigan, would at once conclude that the rigid continuity of the coastline excluded the possibility of all harbor accommodations from Chicago to Grand Traverse Bay."

"It is true that we find few harbors in a state of preparation for occupancy; but it is a singular and interesting and most important fact, that there is not a stream, however small, emptying into Lake Michigan from the east, which does not first discharge its waters into a small lake which communicates almost immediately with Lake Michigan. Looking at a representation of this hydrographic singularity, one can hardly resist the fancy that we have here a real litter of lakelets nestling alongside of the great maternal lake. These baby lakes are bodies of clear water with clean sandy shores, and abound in delicate fish. Toward the north they contain the "speckled trout" in abundance. There are a dozen of these lakelets which furnish depth of water sufficient for the largest steamers." (*)

[[(*) "Harbors" (S to N) include: St. Joseph (Benton Harbor), South Haven, Saugatuck, Holland, Grand Haven, Muskegon, White Lake, Pentwater, Ludington, Manistee, Portage Lake (Onekama), Frankfort, Glen Arbor, Leland, Grand Traverse, Elk Rapids, Charlevoix, Petoskey.]

"The climatic effect of these numerous smaller bodies of fresh water—stretched like a fringe of pearls along the skirt of the peninsula—is to widen the belt of lake influence, and to temper the cold approaching from almost every direction. They also multiply many fold the length of coast-line, and furnish innumerable sites enjoying a water aspect. As the banks of all these lakes are elevated and dry, this lengthening of the line of lake-side situations is a circumstance of very great moment."

"It is worthy of remark that, when we look along the *western* shore of Lake Michigan for the counterpart of this string of lakelets, it is not there! The eastern shore monopolizes again all the advantages. Blessed be the west wind! which, though it pinches the squatter on the prairie, and by the hands of its servants, the waves, digs down the eastern borders of Wisconsin, heaves up piles of sand upon the shore of Michigan, making unwearied additions to the land, and building up the terraces of our crystal lakelets to furnish a "lake view" for every homestead along the border of the " beautiful peninsula."

"At the same time there are few natural harbors along the coast. Grand Traverse Bay, with its two arms and considerable indentations, furnishes magnificent harbors; but the entrances to all the small lakes southward, with a single exception, were originally more or less obstructed by sand-bars. These, at several localities, have been dredged out, so that some of the finest harbors in the world are now accessible."

"Only one of these lakelets possesses a natural outlet of sufficient depth to float large vessels. This is Spring Lake—a gem of a lake, five miles long and half a mile wide—which opens into the broad and deep estuary of the Grand River, near Grand Haven. We present an enlarged view of this fine lake and of the contiguous region to the mouth of Grand River. The great steamers running in connection with the Detroit and Milwaukee Railway, between Grand Haven and Milwaukee, find abundant water to Fruitport at the head of the lake."

Current Perspective: River Improvements and Harbors of Refuge

[*"The Comedy"*, p 33-37.]

In the northern portion of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, the deep indentations of the coast, formed by the numerous rivers and navigable lakes extending back into the country from different points along the shore, are important geographical features. All along the eastern shoreline of Lake Michigan (the western coastline of the State of Michigan) is a scattering of "lakelets" - inland lakes, some quite large, but many much smaller than the Great Lakes. These lakelets are manifested in an unending array of kettle holes, drowned river mouths, and closed embayments shaped by glaciers and meltwaters, further transformed by wind and wave actions, partially emptied by evaporation, and refilled by precipitation in unending seasons. They share many commonalities and some differences in physiography.

Peculiar to Michigan were needs to improve the land-locked entrances of drowned river mouths along the eastern shoreline of Lake Michigan (the West Coast of MI) by creating "harbors of refuge" for shipping, and inland waterways to access the interior of the State. Other "improvement projects" included dams, locks, docks, and/or other appurtenances necessary for transporting timber, powering saw and grist mills, and irrigating newly cleared fields. Many natural river outlets were straightened and new channels dredged to navigable depths to connect nearby inland lakes by "slack-water" canals to Lake Michigan. These included: Saugatuck, Holland, Grand Haven, Muskegon, White Lake, Pentwater, Ludington, Manistee, Portage, Frankfort, Charlevoix, and Petoskey. Most of these lakes had differences in elevation of only a few feet, but Crystal Lake was perched high above the Big Lake. The attempt to connect a canal from Frankfort Harbor to Crystal Lake was to be the most ambitious of the proposed improvements.

In the early 1870s, vast amounts of pine along the headwaters of the rivers along the west coast of Michigan were valueless because they could not be accessed, harvested, and transported downstream to the lumber mills. Rivers were obstructed by numerous log jams of immense size that were judged to be hundreds of years old. Removal of these jams was too great an undertaking for individual groups with limited resources, training, and funding. Several companies were organized to implement "river improvements" to solve this problem of limited access to the timber lands. Most river improvements involved clearing the upstream portions of the rivers, while most harbor improvements involved connecting the drowned river mouths by short canals to Lake Michigan.

People: Inland Lakes of Michigan (Irving Day Scott)

[Scott, I. D., *Inland Lakes of Michigan*, Michigan Geol. Biol. Survey, Pub. 30, Geol. Series 25, Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford, Lansing, MI, 1921, 383pp, pp355-356.

<https://ia800203.us.archive.org/32/items/inlandlakesofmic00scot/inlandlakesofmic00scot.pdf>

[(*) Irving Day Scott (1877-1955) was Professor of Geology, The University of Michigan (1905-1942). He and his students conducted extensive field research on the origin and evolution of Michigan's shoreline dunes along Lake Michigan. His seminal bulletin, "Inland Lakes of Michigan" (1921) includes a chapter on Crystal Lake reflecting a trip around the Lake (July 31, 1914).]

Scott described the isolation of certain large embayment lakes (including Crystal Lake) as distinguished from those being simple drowned river mouth lakes (like Betsie Lake).

"Even though the manner in which these embayments were isolated be known, there still remains the problem of the type of embayment, of which there are several. Some are easily recognized but others, for example Pine, Walloon, Torchlight, (Crystal), etc., which are described in an earlier chapter (See Scott, Chapter IV), present difficulties. Among the types of basins easily recognized are the numerous drowned mouths of streams."

“The causes of the drowning, or partial submergence, of the mouths of the streams entering the southern part of Lake Michigan is due to the uplift of the land in the northeastern part of North America following the retirement of the glacier. It is not necessary to go into the details of this complicated subject to realize that, if the lower part of Lake Michigan were not affected by the uplift while the northern part was being elevated, the water would pile up in the southern part of the lake and, thus, rise with reference to the land. Such was the case and in the tributaries of Lake Michigan as far north as the Betsie River at Frankfort the water backed into the mouths of the stream valleys.” (Scott, p 355-356)

The combined forces of westerly winds and waves formed cliffs and terraces in both embayment and drowned river mouth lakes with “monotonous regularity”. The heads of embayments like Crystal Lake eventually were closed off entirely from the big lake; while the heads of bays with entering streams have deltas that have silted up and require dredging to remain navigable.

“The outline of such lakes is very irregular and, in a typical case, consists first of a main channel which may, or may not, be winding. Farther inland the main channel ramifies and each ramification may in turn divide so that the pattern resembles that of a deciduous tree. In all cases in Michigan the lakes branch to the east and, inasmuch as the strongest winds are from the west, the force of the waves is so largely dissipated in the diverging channels that the effects are insignificant.”

“Conditions were unfavorable for adjustments by shore currents and the occurrence of features due to these agents are very exceptional. Waves and undertow were effective in forming cliffs and terraces which are found with monotonous regularity at levels above the present, in particular the level of Lake Nipissing which stood about fifteen feet above the present lake along this part of the shore. One other common characteristic of these lakes is the tendency for the heads of bays which have entering streams to be silted up, forming a delta-like flat which has pushed a singularly even front into the lake.” (Scott, p 356)

Places: “My New Home in Northern Michigan” (Charles W. Jay)

[Jay, Charles W., My New Home in Northern Michigan, and Other Tales, W.S. & E.W. Sharp, Trenton, 1874, 180pp. <http://books.google.com/books?id=5RUUAAAAYAAJ>

Charles W. Jay, a journalist, spent fifty years of his life in Trenton, NJ, before moving to a log cabin on Blackberry Ridge near Whitehall, MI, in mid-Nov 1871. His first impressions are worthy of lengthy repeat as they might reflect similar views of Archibald Jones who travelled up the eastern shore of Lake Michigan about the same time.

“Perhaps there is no man, however stolid by nature, or hardened by habit, who can release the ties of a lifetime, and bid adieu to scenes endeared by associations running back to the earliest recollections of childhood, without at least a momentary sadness shrouding all his thoughts, and recalling his moral outlawry back to the comparative purity of earlier years.” (Jay, p 15)

“You cross the lake (from WI) to Michigan, and it seems like stepping from civil into savage existence. The towns are simply lumber depots, without agricultural interests. The roads from town to town are only avenues forced through forests of unbroken solitude, with here and there the log huts of lumbermen, but no signs of agriculture larger than a patch of potatoes, or corn sufficient to fatten the solitary pig of the settler. ... The valuable lumber lands of northern Michigan have held her back in the race of Western progression. Speculators have monopolized these, and labor has been diverted from the soil to the felling of trees and the sawing of logs. The few have thus become rich and the many are the slaves of a system of labor that promises no benefits in the future.” (Jay, pp 26-27)

“There is a wonderful fact connected with the Michigan side of the great lake, that points to the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, in a manner so unmistakable, that it cannot fail to strengthen the Christian in his faith, and to weaken the skepticism of the honest and intelligent doubter. / All along the eastern shore, for over two miles inland, are steep and high sand-hills, studded with a stunted growth of pine and hemlock. These hills have been thrown up through the centuries by the action of the winds and waves of the lake, and being of more recent formation, accounts for the weak fertility of the soil, and the consequent dwarfage of the forests.” (Jay, pp 49-50)

“It would be a work of utter impossibility to get the valuable timber that grows beyond this belt, to the waters of the lake, over the sand-hills intervening, without an expenditure so enormous as to forbid the attempt for ages yet to come, or until lumber commanded a price difficult now to contemplate as among the possibilities of the future. Under this state of facts, all the vast region of which I have been writing would be useless in its timber for the necessities of the civilized centres in which it now finds so great and so remunerative a market. / And now I will show wherein the hand of God is seen, in the provision which so happily annuls the difficulty I have described.” (Jay, p 50)

“At average intervals of about fifteen miles, all along our shore of the lake, little inlets enter the mainland, generally from one hundred to one hundred and fifty yards long, and from fifteen to thirty yards wide. Then their waters swell out into beautiful little lakes, which run up for miles into the valuable timber lands, and the most cunning engineer could not have designed these more skillfully for the great need to which they minister. These subordinate lakes are about six miles in length, by two miles wide. And all around the upper rim of this natural basin, large steam saw mills have been erected, the fuel for which costs nothing, and the lumber they yearly turn out is bewilderingly astonishing. An inlet, running from ten to twenty miles still farther into the interior of the pine forests, empties into the head of these smaller lakes I have attempted to describe. So you see that when the timber in the immediate vicinity of the mills is used up, a seemingly inexhaustible supply remains to be felled and floated down from a long distance inland. / The entrance from the great lake is dredged out to the proper depth, wharfed up on either side, and large schooners are thus enabled to enter, load, and depart to distant markets with their cargoes. / Additional force is given to the argument that Divine intelligence designed these marvelous conveniences for the benefit of man, by this other fact which I now introduce for the thoughtful meditation of both Christian believer and skeptical materialist.” (Jay, pp 50-51)

Phenomena: Michigania – The Land of the “Great Waters”
[“*The Comedy*”, pp 25-32)

The initial colonization of the youthful United States and its original thirteen States occurred prior to the American Revolution. The Great Lakes region developed in partnership with its original Native American inhabitants who canoed its waters and traded furs at forts at Detroit and Mackinac. The interior regions of Michigan and the Great Northwest, however, remained largely unknown and unexplored. As the Eastern Seaboard became more settled, descendants of the original colonists and European immigrants began migrating westward for new opportunities.

The “Northwest Territory”, extending from the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to the Great Lakes, was ceded to the United States (1783); became a territory (1787); and then split into smaller territories including the present-day states of OH, IN, IL, MI, WI, and part of MN. Michigan Territory (1805) became the 26th State (1837) (the largest state east of the Mississippi R.). Control over MI was settled by the War of 1812, and land sales followed the rapid surveys of counties in the lower tiers of the Lower Peninsula (1818).

The settlement of Michigan began at Detroit and slowly expanded across the southern portion of the Lower Peninsula. Settlements also sprouted at various locations along the coastline of Lakes Huron

and Michigan, encouraged by the advent of lake travel by clipper ships and steamers, and by the improvements of natural harbors. In the summer of 1819, Walk-in-the-Water made the first steam voyage to Mackinac round trip from Buffalo, NY in 12 days.

The potential opportunities for harnessing the raw untamed potential of a new land, its forests, and its waters were immense! The pioneers saw opportunities for settling and raising a family in a very aesthetically pleasing place having an agreeable and healthful climate. The farmers saw opportunities for growth of fruits and other crops in a favorable climate moderated by nearby Lake Michigan. The loggers and timber barons saw opportunities for harvesting vast timber and cordwood resources. The merchants and shippers saw opportunities to develop and harness natural resources for water power for lumber and grist mills, transport of raw materials and finished goods to distant markets, and creation of harbors of refuge from the storms of Lake Michigan. Eventually, the visitors of the future saw opportunities for the locale to become a prime destination for recreation and tourism away from the "hustle-and-bustle", "work-away" world of the growing big cities of the East and Midwest.

Potpourri: "The Michigan Immigrant's Song

[***"The Comedy"***, pp 25-32]

"Come all ye Yankee farmers who wish to change your lot,
Who've spunk enough to travel beyond your native spot,
And leave behind the village where Pa and Ma must stay,
Come follow me and settle in Michigania.
Yea, Yea, Yea, Michigania."

"The Michigan Emigrant's Song", or "Michigania", as it was later known, was first published in the Detroit Courier in 1831. It expressed the spirit of the time, and from 1830 to 1837, Michigan was the most popular destination for westward-moving pioneers. As pointed out by Silas Farmer, "The larger part of these immigrants were from New York, and the rest mostly from New England. It is probable that, in proportion to its population, Detroit, and in fact the entire State of Michigan, has a larger percentage of New York and New England people than any other western city or State. At one time it seemed as though all New England was coming. The emigration fever pervaded almost every hamlet of New England, and this song was very popular, and is known to have been largely influential in promoting emigration:"

Before the definition of its boundaries by the state legislature in 1863, Benzie County was part of Leelanau Co., and even after separation, it remained attached for civil and municipal purposes to Grand Traverse Co. In actuality, it had no true separate existence as a county except in name and defined territory, and remained so until 1869, when it became an independent county by another act of the state legislature. Benzie County, as it is now constituted, is bounded on the north by Leelanau Co., on the east by Grand Traverse Co., on the south by Manistee Co., and on the west by Lake Michigan; and is composed of twelve (12) townships, viz. Almira, Benzonia, Blaine, Colfax, Crystal Lake, Gilmore, Homestead, Inland, Joyfield, Lake, Platte, and Weldon.

Thus, there were mixed impressions of Michigania. It was largely unknown territory - an unexplored, uncharted, unsurveyed, and unsettled expanse of wilderness. It was wild and alluring, but of uncertain consequence. How to travel there and how to begin to do things was of prime concern to new settlers.

Migrants had begun moving westward from the north Atlantic and middle states many years before Horace Greeley (*) advised young men to go west and grow up with the country. He would not have given this advice if the pioneers had not already blazed the way for civilization to the western lakes

and rivers, wildernesses, and prairies. Western migration had begun early in the seventeenth century, but was very slow for a long time, and did not reach a peak until the last half of the 1800s, when canals, steamboats, and railroads made the fertile lands of the great lake region accessible and available.

By the mid-1800s, Western migration was in “full flood”, as transportation by river and lake offered advantages over rough-hewed roads through the wilderness, and railroads had not yet been fully developed in the region. The completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 proved that the Nation could benefit from a system of inland waterways. As commerce increased with settlement, attention was turned toward making more connections by other canals to the Great Lakes and improvements to rivers and harbors. Transportation upon the Great Lakes was expanding, but there was a dearth of safe “*harbors of refuge*”.

In Reality: The number of inland lakes in Michigan: 62,798 lakes \geq 0.1 Acres, 26,266 lakes \geq 1.0 A, 6,537 lakes \geq 10.0 A, 1,148 lakes \geq 100 A, 98 lakes \geq 1,000 A, and 10 lakes \geq 10,000 A (*).

[(*) Breck, James E., Compilation of Databases on Michigan Lakes, State of Michigan, Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Division, Technical Report No. 2004-2, December 2004, 46pp.
<http://www.michigandnr.com/PUBLICATIONS/PDFS/ifr/ifribra/technical/reports/2004-2tr.pdf>]

Epilogue

The sun has set, and o'er the quiet lake
His light still lingers, reluctant to depart.
The darkening hills draw close, and over all
Peace reigns, but discontent still fills my heart.

But as I stand alone upon the shore
Peace also comes to me - I seem to hear
A voice amongst the murmur of the waves
Saying. "Be still and know that God is near."

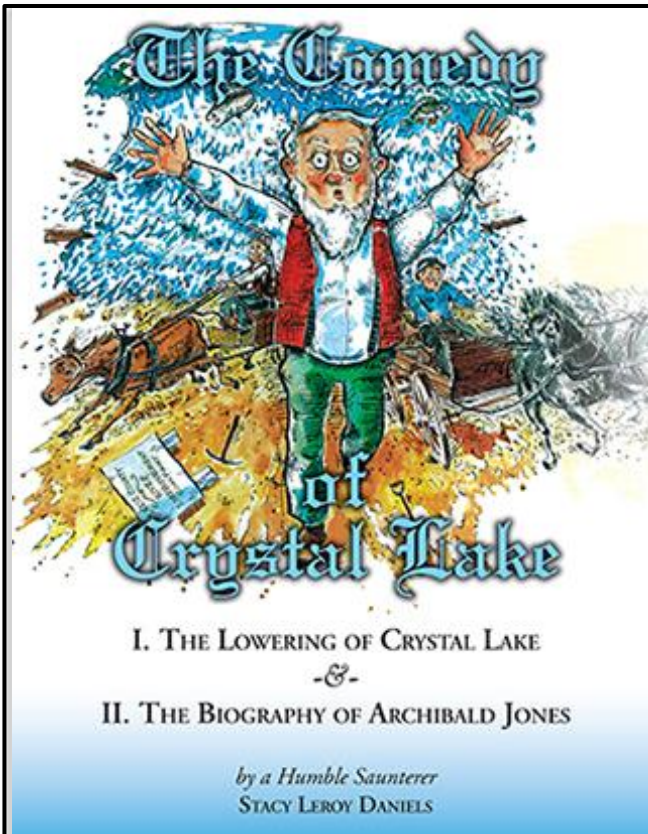
And so, O lovely lake, you gave to me
A message straight from God. And I still take
That message with me as I wander far.
And hope once more to see you, Crystal Lake.

-- Walter F. Case, 04 Feb 1895 – 06 Mar 1923, “*The Tragedy of Crystal Lake*”, 1922.

References:

Daniels, Stacy Leroy, **“The Comedy of Crystal Lake”** , I. The Lowering of Crystal Lake; II. The Biography of Archibald Jones, Being a Summary Chronicle with Many More sidelights, written in Two Parts, of a seemingly Ill-Fated Historical Event, so epochal in its nature as to have had a permanent bearing upon the development and future of Benzie Co., Northwest Lower Michigan, together with myriad viewpoints of its diverse characters and sundry locales, &c, &c., Flushed With Pride Press, ©2015, 496pp. ISBN 978-0-692-21715-3 www.CrystalLakeComedy.com

Case, William L., **“The Tragedy of Crystal Lake”** , “with Some Sidelights, By a Survivor, 1st Ed., J.W. Saunders, Beulah, MI, 1922, 17pp. (A copy of the 2007 reprint is included in **“The Comedy”**.)



“THE COMEDY OF CRYSTAL LAKE”
[Sequel to the classic “Tragedy” (1922)]

The story of Archibald Jones and the attempt to build a canal from Crystal Lake to Lake Michigan in 1873. The dramatic lowering of a very large inland lake and the creation of its sandy beach.

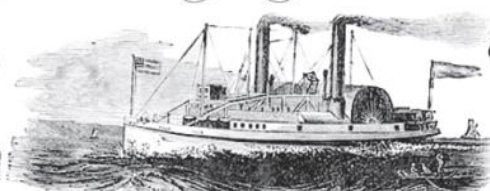
The epochal event that led to the development of Crystal Lake and Benzie Co.

Dr. Stacy Leroy Daniels, “President, *pro temp* Benzie Co. River Improvement Co., Est 1873”
ISBN 978-0-692-21715-3 | Hardcover | 9” x 12”
496 Pages | 200 Illustrations
Flushed With Pride Press ©2015
PO BOX 281, Frankfort, MI 49635
FlushedWithPridePress@gmail.com
www.CrystalLakeComedy.com

Proceeds from direct sales to local nonprofits

\$ 32

Benzie Co. River Improvement Co.
Organized 1873 under the *General Law of Michigan.*



Stalk-water canals are our speciality
Steam-powered paddleboats built on demand.
If you're low and wet, we will make you high and dry!

We Build Better Than You Know.
Travel in luxury on the Crystal Lake Canals of Benzie County, MI.



A Jones
President

