

100th

1925

ANNIVERSARY

Gundlach Champion, Inc.

1925-1975



*We treasure the Past
on which we build our Future.*

1898 - 1998



***Dan LeVeque, President
Gundlach Champion, Inc.
May, 1996 - Present***

GUNDLACH CHAMPION, INC.

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

SINCE 1898



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P.O. BOX 278
HOUGHTON, MICHIGAN 49931-0278
(906) 482-2480
FAX # (906) 482-8862

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(218) 262-8506
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Dear Reader:

There is a saying that history repeats itself. If this be true, our future will be filled with challenges, and balanced by an equal number of successes.

From Herman Gundlach, Sr., through "Winks" Gundlach, to Bill Verrette, this company has been guided by men who dared to dream. Their dreams walked hand-in-hand with good business sense, integrity, and above all else, dedication to their employees.


As you read through this historical perspective, concentrate not on the buildings that were built. Instead, salute the strengths of character that guided Herman, Winks and Bill.

Because of them, we step boldly into the future, confident that the values we have garnered from our past will serve us well. They laid the foundation upon which to build.

We must also remember the generations of dedicated employees, customers and suppliers who have contributed to our success. Without you, we would not be standing at the threshold of our second hundred years. You helped create our past. Knowing full well that you will also build our future, we dedicate this anniversary history to you.

Sincerely,

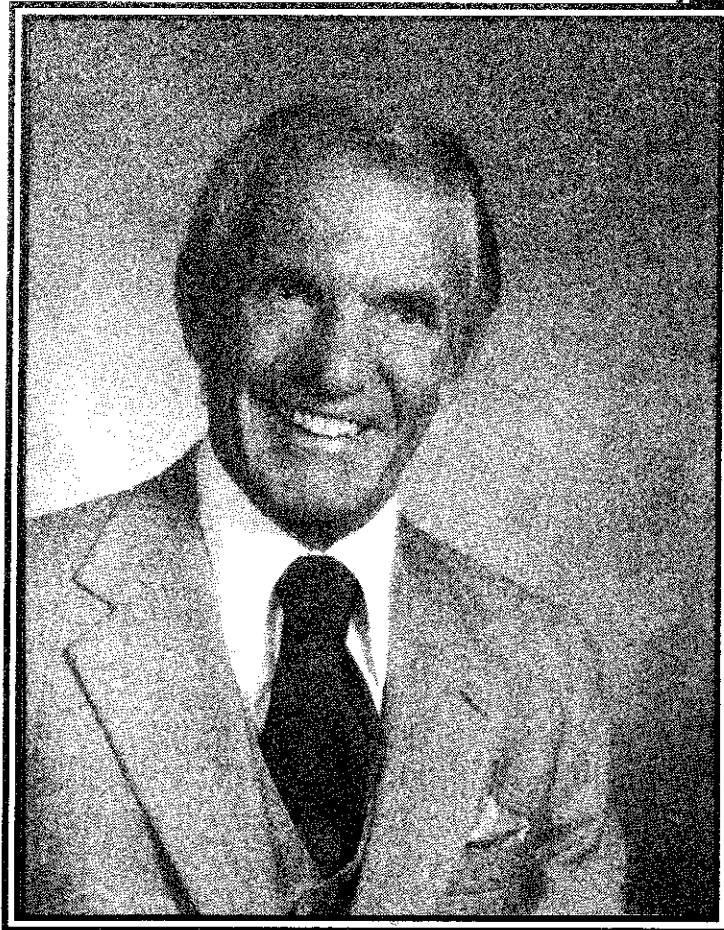
GUNDLACH CHAMPION, INC.


Daniel E. LeVeque
President

A Champion, Inc. Company



*Herman Gundlach
Founder and President
1898 - 1945*



*Herman "Winks" Gundlach
President
1945-1989*



~ A Century Of Quality ~

When Herman Gundlach, Sr., signed the papers to form a partnership with F.P. Mueller in 1898, it was the beginning of a dream. A century later, that dream has grown into a legend that is still committed to the same detail and excellence.

The mission of Gundlach Champion, Inc. today is to be the preferred company that customers call first. To maintain this preferred status, we are committed to safety, quality, customer service, integrity, personal involvement with our clients, and outreach to community affiliations.

Gundlach Champion, Inc. has evolved with the changing times. A short time after his arrival, Gundlach became the sole owner. In 1915, he rejected the opportunity to enter the door to possible world fame with construction of Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan. He remained in Michigan's Copper Country.

In 1945, after the death of the man he loved, Herman "Winks" Gundlach followed in his father's footsteps to assume leadership of the company. With heavy support and persuasion of the community, young Herman Gundlach chose to build in the place of his birth, rather than seek his fortunes on a wider scene.

On May 19, 1989, Gundlach, Inc. became the wholly-owned subsidiary of Champion, Inc., of Iron Mountain, Michigan, a longtime contemporary, competitor and friend.

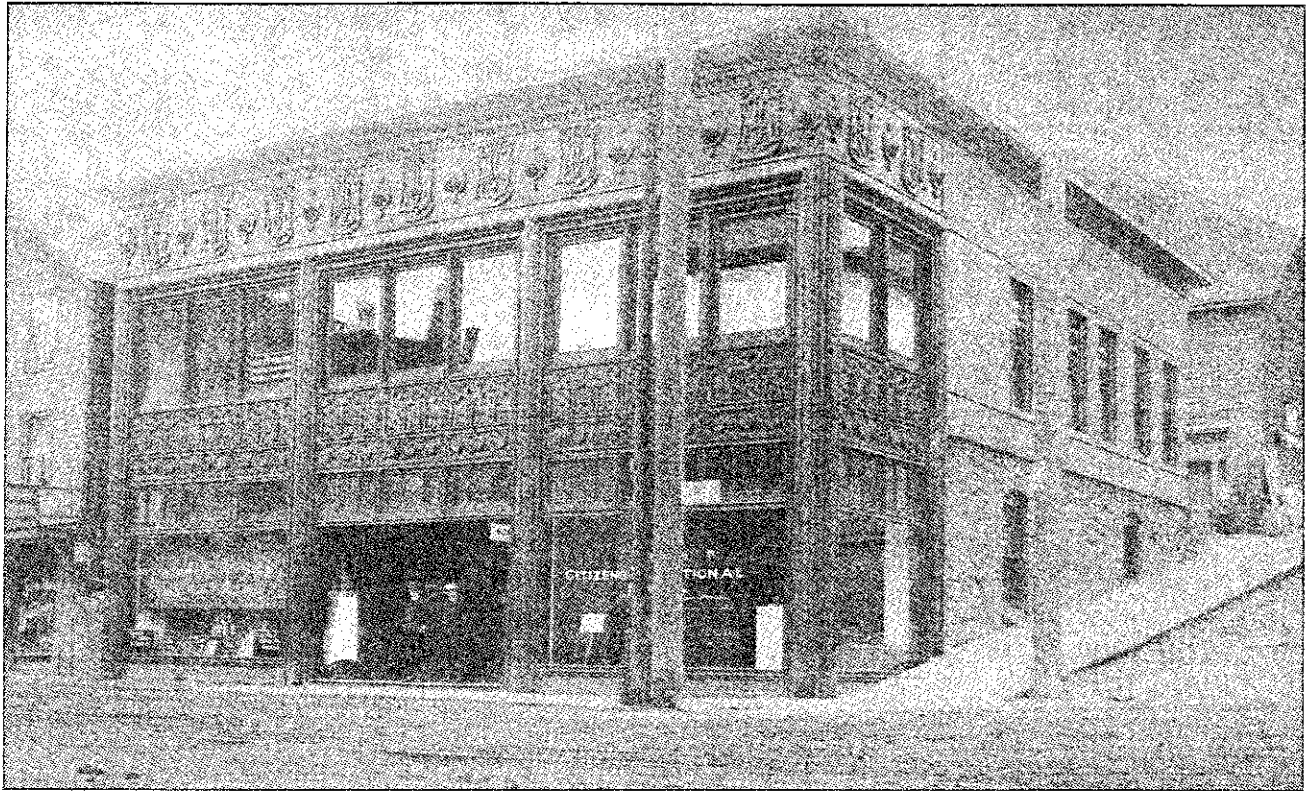
From the beginning, the senior Herman Gundlach, then his son, had demanded the highest quality workmanship of themselves and of their crews. They motivated by example. They discovered that success lay in hiring good people and treating them right. Like a conductor of a symphony, they could wave the baton to see the building rise, but the Gundlachs believed that without the players - the trusted workers - the music and the building could not rise.

Today Gundlach Champion, Inc. demands that same high quality.

Projects have included many schools and other public buildings, industrial complexes and private homes. The campuses of Michigan Tech University at Houghton and Suomi College at Hancock stand in testimony to the Gundlach craft.

Thirty years ago, Herman Gundlach, Inc. was listed as one of the 400 largest construction companies in the nation, the third-oldest in Michigan, and among the 100 oldest in the United States. Twenty years ago, the company was listed among Michigan's top three in man hours of work.

As published in Engineering News Record, in 1998 Gundlach Champion, Inc., is one of three construction services in the nation celebrating its centennial year.



Herman Gundlach constructed the Leopold Building. He moved F.P. Mueller Construction into the second floor.

THE BEGINNING OF A LEGEND **1898-1916**

In 1897, a determined 20-year-old contractor stepped off the Chicago train at Houghton in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, into a thriving village of approximately 2,700 people. The copper boom of the 1840s had brought settlement and prosperity to the region. Houghton and the twin city of Hancock across the Portage Canal boasted schools, Michigan School of Mines (now Michigan Tech University), Suomi College, newspapers, and other amenities of growing northern cities. The Western Upper Peninsula was in need of public buildings, schools, business structures and homes. As partner and projects manager for contractor F.P. Mueller, Herman Gundlach set about to answer that need.

The six foot, 200 pound contractor settled into the Board of Trade, a popular hotel with Victorian lobby a block down the hill from the imposing Douglass House. At the corner of Huron Street and Sheldon Avenue, he supervised the construction of a three-story building for Nathan Leopold, Sr. whom he had known in Chicago.

Upon completion, Gundlach occupied the second floor as an office.

Growing up on Chicago's Pine Grove Avenue, Gundlach had been driven by a passion for family, sports, music and the buildings of the city. His father was a music teacher and head of Chicago's German choral society; he had taught his children well. The Gundlachs were all musicians; Herman was an accomplished violinist. Even in later years, when the family returned to visit, Herman joined his brothers and one sister in a string ensemble.

After graduating from Lake View High School at the age of 16, Herman was apprenticed to a Chicago architectural firm as a draftsman for three years, and worked as an apprentice carpenter. Herman was German of the old school, with a strong work ethic. He was noticed by the prestigious firm of F.P. Mueller whose work included that of Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright was an up-and-coming architect who had recently gone out on his own. He was designing homes and churches around Oak Park, Illinois, and drawing ideas for his Prairie homes such as the showplace Dana-Thomas House in Springfield, Illinois, that was completed in 1903.

On His Own

In 1897, Mueller had landed contracts for work in Houghton. The following year the company chose a select crew and headed north. After Herman Gundlach earned his journeyman carpenter card, he was superintendent of the Michigan projects. Early projects included the Gogebic County Courthouse and jail at Ontonagon, James R. Dee Building, the Citizens National Bank on Houghton's Sheldon Avenue, and many homes along Houghton's College Avenue and in Hancock.

From the beginning, Gundlach demonstrated the ability to manage multiple projects and tasks at the same time. Honesty and fairness were important to him.

"If you owed him a nickel, my father collected. Not six cents, but he wanted his nickel," the younger Gundlach said.

He believed in contributing to the leadership of the community, and was soon a Director of the Good Will Farm, financial drive chairman for the American Red Cross, and numerous other groups.

Twelve years before Gundlach's arrival, the Michigan State Legislature had established a school in Houghton to train students in the sciences needed in the development of the state's natural resources. In the beginning it was called Michigan School of Mines. Gundlach affected physical changes at this fledgling school of learning when he erected building after building across the growing campus. Early Gundlach projects include the present R.O.T.C. building, McNair Hall, the original Sigma Rho House and the Chemistry Building. The last two structures were demolished by Gundlach to build the Mechanical Engineering building and Wadsworth Hall.

When Gundlach purchased Mueller's part of the business, he was on his own.

The year before his arrival, a new educational institution had been established on the Hancock side of the Portage Canal, Suomi College. It was the first and still remains the nation's only Finnish American college. Soon a competing contractor won the bid for Suomi's first building, Old Main. As Herman Gundlach observed the construction, he noticed a young journeyman carpenter who had recently arrived from Finland — Emil Tikkanen. He persuaded Emil to come to work for him, and immediately named him foreman on Gundlach buildings going up at nearby South Range.

"Emil spent the major part of his adult life — nearly sixty years — with our company as a General Superintendent. He was the Dean of the Building Trades in Northern Michigan," Gundlach said.

Winter Construction

It didn't take Gundlach long to recognize the need for a way to keep his crews working through the long winters that stretch from October to May. Houghton and Michigan's Western Upper Peninsula average up to 200 inches of snowfall annually, and can reach half again that amount. Average accumulation is three feet. As winter approached, the crew under the direction of Herman Gundlach rushed to enclose as much of the work area as possible, so as to allow the men to continue construction when the cold and snows hit. The extra effort paid off; soon crews were working on into spring for year-around employment.

In the predawn hours of Tuesday, October 1, 1901, a fire broke out in the kitchen of the Douglass House, and quickly spread to other parts of the hotel. The landmark hotel dominated the skyline soon after the city was founded 35 years previously. In 1889, owners had invested \$125,000 in a lavish expansion with balconies and turrets, and an additional \$30,000 to \$40,000 in furnishings. In 1901 when the rubble and ashes were cleared, owners announced that they would rebuild, with Herman Gundlach as the contractor.

It was during the construction of the Douglass House that Gundlach met Elvira Amanda Zenner who worked in the U.S. Post Office in Houghton. She graduated from Ripley High School, and had spent her life in the Copper Country. Elvira and Herman were married in 1903.

East Versus West

In 1915, Frank Lloyd Wright was completing his design of a hotel that was destined to be the world's most famous, the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan. The following year, the Mueller company was chosen to supervise construction of this impressive structure. He sent for Gundlach. Would he come along?

Herman and Elvira had settled comfortably into the home that Gundlach had built at 111 West Douglass Street in Houghton. They were the proud parents of three daughters and a two-year-old son affectionately called "Winks." Elvira's parents lived a few blocks

away on Houghton's 6th Street, also a Gundlach home.

The company had completed the \$24,700 Ishpeming Fire Hall, and were working on buildings at Northern State Normal (Northern Michigan University) at Marquette, specifically the stone edifice, Kay Hall, since demolished.

Bids had already been submitted for construction of Michigan Tech's Administration Building. Among other considerations to Mueller's offer, Gundlach consulted Tech President F. W. McNair. McNair said the Administration Building contract would only go to the Gundlach company if Herman stayed for the project's completion, and other campus projects that were coming up. Gundlach stayed for those projects, plus construction of most of Tech's campus and many other public buildings across the Upper Peninsula, Michigan and nearby states.

Mueller moved to the Tokyo project and remained with it until its completion in 1923, when he returned to his base in Chicago to resume other projects. On the opening day of Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel, Tokyo was hit by the most devastating earthquake that it had ever known. Mercifully, the hotel was spared with minimal damage. The Imperial recovered, and for many years was recognized as the world's most famous luxury hotel.



STEEL, BRICKS AND STONES 1917-1944

At a time when most construction workers were laid off on November 15 for deer season, with little prospect of work until April of the next year when the traditional construction started up again, Gundlach continually worked to guarantee year-around employment.

"He became an early pioneer in winter construction. He found no joy in seeing people go home for the hard winter months and expect them to be loyal when they came back in April," Winks Gundlach said.

With steady employment and respect the company showed to the crews, employee turnover was low.

When the senior Gundlach took Emil Tikkanen off the Old Main project at Suomi College, he had recognized the Finnish carpenter as a gifted builder. A bachelor for many years, Tikkanen was foreman for the construction of schools in Bessemer, Puritan, Crystal Falls and other locations throughout the Western Upper Peninsula. After completion of the Crystal Falls Inn, Tikkanen followed Gundlach downstate for major construction there.

Tikkanen built with an obsession to learn. He studied and secured union cards from every trade, whether earned or honorary. When challenged by another worker, he drew out his thick index card folder, flipped it open and let 16 union cards roll out on exhibit. Pointing emphatically to the field of challenge, he said, "I'll make that decision." Case closed!

After Winks Gundlach assumed the presidency in December of 1945, Tikkanen remained with him until the day he died.

Around 1921, Rotary International formed a chapter in Houghton. Herman Gundlach joined the following year, and remained a dedicated member until his death.

HERMAN GUNDLACH
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION
General Contractor
Lampold Building Phone 282

Houghton, Mich., April 4, 1918.

Quincy Mining Co.,
Hancock, Mich.

Gentlemen:

I herewith propose to furnish all labor and material required for the erection and completion of a Number Two Hoist House for you in accordance with plans and specifications at a net profit of ten percent, (10%), above the cost. The cost to be the actual cost of all labor, materials and incidentals plus ten percent for general overhead expense and the percentage is to be figured on all items whether furnished by me or by you.

If this proposition is satisfactory I will be very glad to take the matter up with you further and order necessary materials promptly.

Yours very truly,

H. G.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Herman Gundlach".

Herman Gundlach's 1918 bid to Quincy Mining Co. stands in marked contrast to bids of today.

Every year the Rotary picnic was at the Gundlach camp at Stonington near the small town of Toivola.

"Topper — I called my father "Topper" — put on the picnic for up to 70 people. Mother would bake chicken pot pies for everyone," Winks said. Later, the Rotary picnic was carried on by Winks and his wife Barbara.

After Winks was old enough to hunt, he and his father often went to the woods together.

"When I was about 20 years old, he was 50. You would think we were angry with each other, the way we would rough-house, like it was a knock-down free-for-all," Winks recalled, "We acted like brothers."

In the middle of the Depression, new building projects were scarce in Northern Michigan. Detroit & Northern Savings and Loan with home office in Hancock was helping General Motors Corp. to finance housing for their employees in Flint. Detroit & Northern turned to Gundlach. The Gundlach company was awarded the contract; Herman and his crew moved to Flint and constructed 250 homes for General Motors. Later, Gundlach returned to Flint to build the Michigan Bell Telephone building, A.C. Spark Plug Company, and St. Michael's School. The first job after their return was the Otter Lake School.

Like Father, Like Son

As a teenager Winks was growing up like his father in many ways. Summers, he joined Gundlach construction crews as a laborer. The Gundlachs loved physical challenge and athletics of all kinds — baseball, camping, but especially football. Back in Chicago, the senior Herman had played center for the city's only pro team, the Chicago Bankers. One game was played in Ishpeming. The Chicago team, known as "The Raiders," felt challenged. The previous year, the Ishpeming team had won both State and Midwest championships.

The team arrived in Ishpeming in a snow storm. With spirits still high, they took to the field. The Raiders scored the victory that

day, beating the Ishpeming Rough Riders 3-0.

Gundlach's arrival in the Copper Country was fortuitous for the athlete; it was an era of national hockey championship teams. As its most famous player, Gundlach also organized the Portage Lake football team. They won most of their matches against other Upper Peninsula teams.

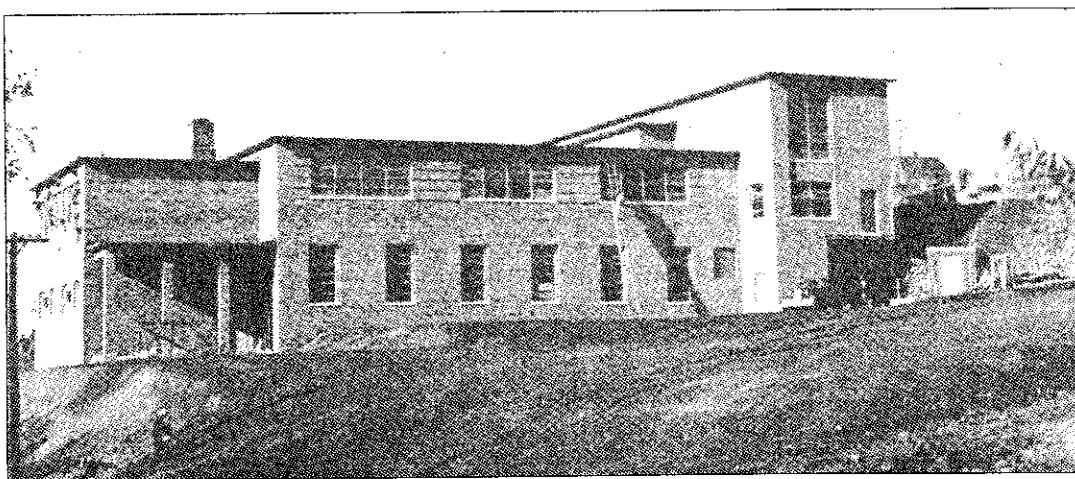
"Football was a rough game in those years, and he loved it," said Winks who was also destined for achievements on the field.

In 1930, Winks graduated from Houghton High School to attend Worcester Academy in Worcester, Massachusetts. Winks was a lineman on the team in 1931.

After graduation, Winks was accepted at Harvard University. His major was Civil Engineering. He quickly earned the nickname "Gunny". The 195 pound, six foot freshman went out for football, and landed a position as right guard, wearing the number "53." At the beginning of the 1934 football season, Gunny was elected captain of the varsity team. He was the first Michigan player to lead the Harvard team, and the first guard in 18 years to be named Captain. Newspapers called the husky, hard-hitting guard the "Iron Man".

His father, the family, and the Copper Country were fiercely loyal to Winks and to football. Winks wired the score home immediately after every game that was not radio broadcasted. His father filled page after page in scrap books, just as later he would gather scrap books of all his construction projects.

Winks, "Gunny" to his Harvard classmates and friends, graduated after a successful scholastic and foot-



Nikander Hall at Suomi College was designed by celebrated Finnish architect Eero Saarinen and built by Herman Gundlach, Sr..

ball career, First Marshal of his Senior Class of 1935. The hard-hitting guard from Michigan was named to various All-American and All-Star teams, including the College All-Stars VS Chicago Bears in 1935 at Soldier's Field. He signed and played briefly with George Marshall's NFL Team, the Boston Redskins. Still involved with athletics, he wrote sports a short while for the Boston Post. In 1973, Winks was inducted into the Upper Peninsula Sports Hall of Fame, and the Harvard Varsity Club Hall of Fame.

Time To Build

But it was time to build. Winks joined Sinclair Refining Co. of Chicago and Atlanta. In 1938 he had married the lovely Barbara Kettle, a Radcliffe graduate from Jamestown, New York. Their family was growing with the arrival of a parade of little girls that would in the coming years number four. The World War II years caught up with them in Atlanta.

Back home in the 1930s, Suomi College was growing. Suomi turned to celebrated Finnish architect Elial Saarinen as the designer of Nikander Hall, with Herman Gundlach as the general contractor. Saarinen had moved from his native Finland in 1925 to become the first president of Cranbrook Academy of Art at Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

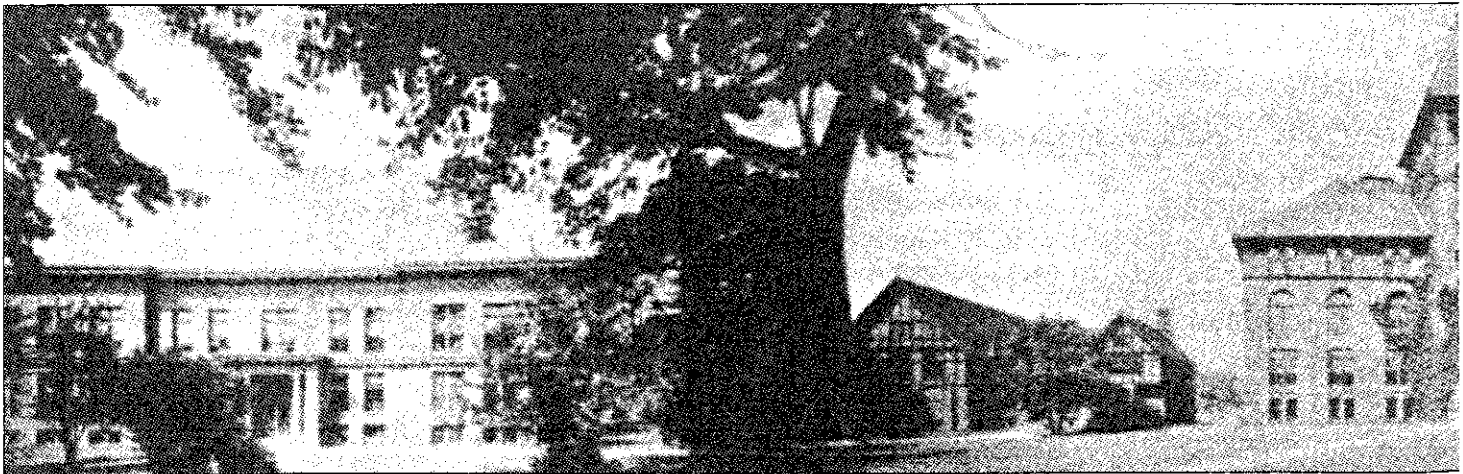
Nikander Hall was the beginning of the Gundlach company's commitment to Suomi College; it continues to this day. Suomi construction has included the Student Center, Library, Science Building, Paavo Nurmi Center, and almost every building on the campus. Winks' sisters Henriette and Dorteia attended Suomi for business train-

ing after graduating from the University of Michigan, joining the staff of Gundlach.

Gundlach bid on a mental facility to be constructed at Newberry, and was awarded the contract, and subsequently many more buildings there. However, the senior Gundlach bid less and less as the war approached, then stopped bidding at all.

"I was already in the service," Winks said. "My father felt that if you couldn't enter the service, you should not be rewarded with contract work during the war. He did very little during that time."

Major Herman Gundlach was stationed with the Corps of Engineers, serving in England and Germany. On the night of June 27, 1945, while on his way to Hamburg, Germany, he was struck with a terrible premonition. That night he wrote a letter to his parents and stuck it in his pocket until he could find an opportunity to mail it home. Three days later, he received notice that his father had died. The man who orchestrated Gundlach construction was gone. The baton had fallen.



Herman Gundlach buildings at Michigan College of Mines: Library and Museum (1907), Chemistry (190)

A GROWING FIRM

1945-1965

Major Herman Gundlach was in New York, with orders for Japan when victory was declared. Discharged from military service, he returned to Houghton to see the family before picking up his prewar construction life in Atlanta. He had no intentions of returning to the Copper Country full time. But his mother was in Houghton, his sisters were near, and old friends of his father were gently persuading him to stay.

"It seemed so peaceful," he said. Another Gundlach lifted the baton.

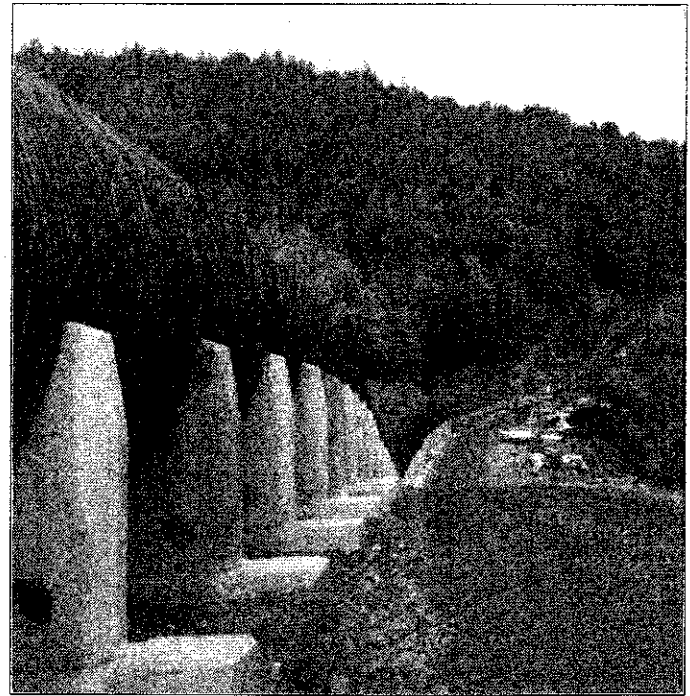
His sister Dorteia was with the Michigan Pardon and Parole Commission in Lansing.

"I enticed her back to Houghton to work with us as corporate secretary," Gundlach said. Henriette served as Gundlach Vice President and Controller until her death in 1973. After sister Elvira retired with 39 years at Michigan Tech, she came to Gundlach part time. "My sisters were very supportive of their brother," Gundlach said.

Gundlach, Inc. was constructing public buildings, sawmills, dry kilns, planing mills, churches and restaurants.

In 1951-52, the architectural and engineering firm of Pace Associates of Chicago developed the White Pine copper mining project for the Copper Range Company. During the project, Pace solicited bids from local contractors for the basic start-up such as dorms, service buildings and boiler house. Gundlach was a successful bidder of a \$1.8 million housing project.

"Being a project supervisor representing Pace and

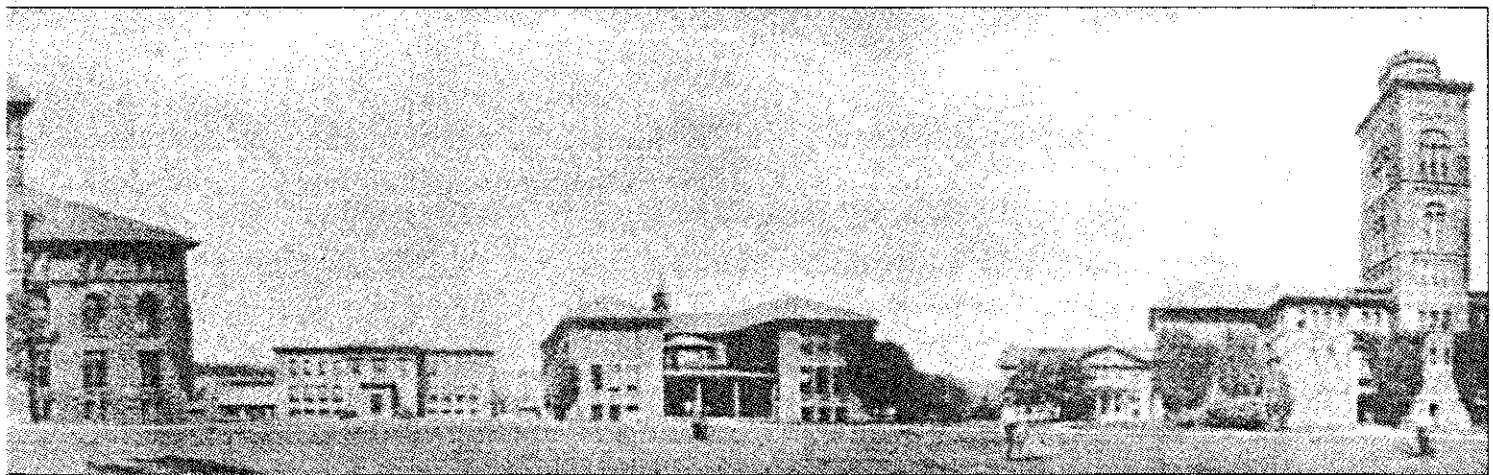


The mile-long wooden Victoria Dam Pipeline was rebuilt with new footings and new saddles cast in Ripley.

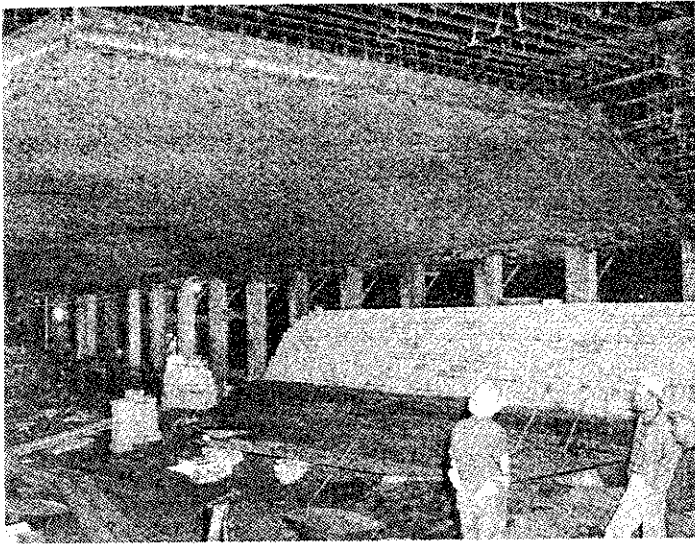
Copper Range, I made close contacts with Gundlach construction," said Warren Monberg.

As in the past, Gundlach worked to stretch the construction season to span the long snowy Michigan winters. The concept is common practice in 1998, but the elder Herman Gundlach laid the foundations for year-around construction a hundred years ago.

On the White Pine project, working with three feet of snow and temperatures plunging to 40 degrees below zero was more than a possibility. Materials and supplies for



Civil/Mining/Engineering (1902), Gym and Clubhouse (1906), Metallurgy (1903), and Administration (1909).



Construction at the White Pine copper mine required many man-hours in the 1950's and 1960's.

130 houses had to be put under cover for construction work to continue through the winter. Among other innovations, Gundlach set up an enclosed precutting operation to prime exterior siding and doors, and prime and assemble windows. Material for each house was pre-packaged for delivery in an early prefab operation.

For pouring concrete during winter construction, Gundlach designed and put in place tarp-covered frames to hold in heat during the critical curing process.

Winter brought snow and more snow. When heavy snows made roads impassable to wheel machines needed to move lumber materials and other supplies, a bobsled with tractor hitch took the load. At first glance some winter practices seemed minor, but cleaning snow and ice from treads of crawling units prevented overnight freezing or broken treads. This could make the difference in getting the operation underway the next morning.

Finding The Right People

Paul Frair, a young Civil Engineer graduate from Michigan Tech, was in the state of New York working on the construction of a high school. Upon graduation, he had tried to remain in the Copper Country. In fact, he had already chosen the company he wanted to work for, but no jobs were available. While a student, he had lived in a house trailer near a heating plant. One day Gundlach, Inc. had showed up with word that his trailer would have to be moved. They were going to expand the plant.

As he watched the men work, he was impressed with the job and the employees. "I thought some day I'd like to work with that outfit," he said.

Back in Houghton with the White Pine contract, a friend recommended that Gundlach hire Frair. Gundlach called.

"I must have said the right thing," Frair said. He arrived in Houghton on Labor Day, 1952, and retired in 1988 as vice president. Frair's first Gundlach job was laying out framing for the White Pine houses and original mine dormitories and cafeteria.

Finally the project was completed and Monberg's job was done.

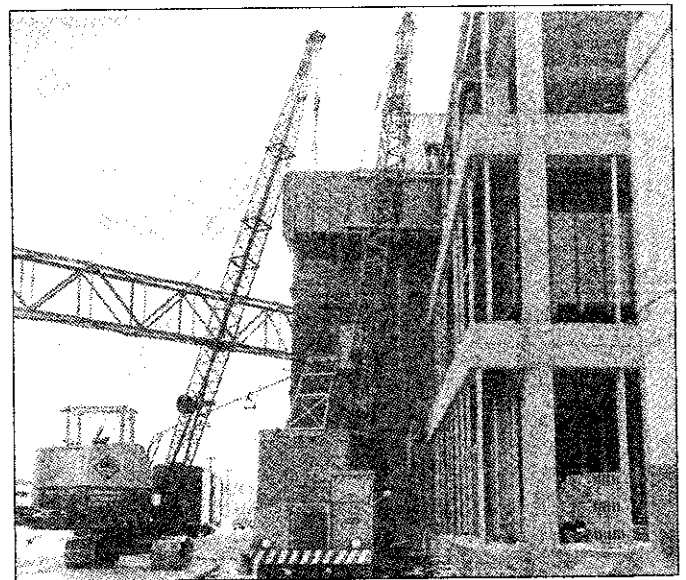
"Then Gundiach offered me a position in Houghton," he said.

Monberg had a wife, three children and a home in Chicago. They decided they were tired of living in the suburbs and commuting. He joined Gundlach on a full-time basis in 1954, working as an estimator and subsequently put in charge of all outside construction work. He stayed for 31 years, retiring as senior vice president.

"Longevity of the employees is a statement in itself. Most stayed on and on forever," he said. "I'm a workaholic and I loved it and I miss it."

Getting The Job Done

He had found where he wanted to be. "We operated under the concept that honesty and your word is your bond. The only way to go is with lump-sum contracts



Expansion was underway in 1957 at Bosch Brewery in Houghton, a longtime client and friend of Herman Gundlach, Inc..

where reputation and integrity is on the line. We accepted the job and we did it."

In 1955, Gundlach, Inc. was low bidder on two motel-type units with 15 rooms each for National Parks Concessions in Lake Superior's Isle Royale National Park located 70 miles offshore from Houghton. On November 31, well after normal transportation has ceased to the 45-mile-long island, Paul Frair boarded the National Park's ferry Ranger II to Isle Royale to look over the site and determine what had to be done. They were snow-bound on the island for several days.

As projects manager, Frair spent the remainder of that winter lining up materials needed to complete the job.

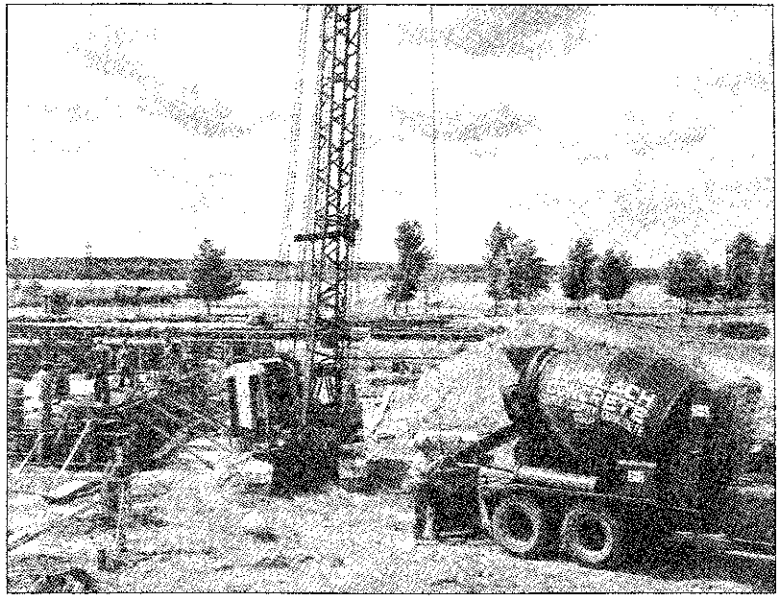
"The contract allowed us ten trips on the Ranger to move materials from the Houghton dock to the project site at Rock Harbor on Isle Royale," Frair recalled.

On April 17, 1956, Frair left the Houghton dock with his crew. They returned to the dock on Labor Day week-end with project successfully complete.

There were other interesting projects: Michigan Tech's thousand-room Wadsworth Hall, one of the largest dormitories in the country at that time, and Tech's Civil-Geology Engineering Building. Gundlach constructed all of the other high-rises on the Tech campus, including the 150 married student housing units designed by famous architect M. Yamasaki. They were reminiscent of the company owned copper miners' homes. Frair recalled when the Upper Peninsula Power Company (UPPCO) of Houghton awarded Gundlach contract to rebuild a mile-long wooden pipeline in Ontonagon County. The line diverted water from the Victoria Reservoir on the West Branch of the Ontonagon River, to the water-driven turbines in the power house below the Victoria Dam.

"It was like a big horizontal barrel," Frair said. Each project seemed to call for unique problems and solutions all its own.

On another UPPCO project, Gundlach refaced the Victoria Dam where concrete was peeling off. With no way to lower the lake level, a hole was drilled through the lowest part of the dam "like drilling a hole in the bottom of a bathtub, but from the outside." Lake water behind the dam was lowered 90 feet, the concrete slurry Gunitite was pumped through hoses and blown into the dam, and the project was successfully completed.



Building projects with U.P. Power took Gundlach all over the Copper Country, including this construction at L'Anse.

Above the Victoria Reservoir, UPPCO was experiencing problems with a six-foot diameter pipe that feeds water into Lake Victoria. Frair's crew inserted a smaller pipe, maneuvered it through the larger pipe and around its corners, drilled holes from the ground above, and injected a slurry of cement between the pipes.

"Our main objective was to bring jobs in on budget, on time or prior to," said Warren Monberg. "We worked with the understanding that time was money."

On one such job, the U.S. Congress allocated \$4.6 million towards renovation of 110 housing units at K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base near Marquette. Proposition: at their own cost and expense, plans, program and design of renovation was to be submitted with the bid, at no guarantee of reimbursement. Gundlach invested near \$28 thousand in these plans. They were the successful bidder. The job was completed ahead of schedule and to the satisfaction of the government.

The year 1965 brought a contract of \$2 million for construction of the library at Michigan Tech.

The August 12, 1965 issue of Engineering News Record listed Herman Gundlach, Inc. as one of the 400 largest in the United States. Several years prior, Gundlach had been listed as the third-oldest general building contractor in the state of Michigan, and among the 100 oldest in the nation.





Michigan Tech's \$2 million Library built by Gundlach in 1966 had come a long way from the library building of 1907.

BUILDING WITH THE CHANGING TIMES - 1966-1989

Steel, concrete, bricks and stones with solid foundations rose against the skylines around the Copper Country and the Great Lakes. Gundlach Construction signs, cranes and hard-hats marked the sites of new schools, stores, plants, banks, churches, mills, and hospitals. From the beginning, Gundlach had continued to look beyond the job to the customer, giving service, making friends.

Work continued on the Michigan Tech Library and the copper mine at White Pine. Copper Country Concrete was a big help during many such projects. The subsidiary company had been formed in 1958 during construction of the Portage Lift Bridge that spans the Portage Canal between Houghton and Hancock. With a contract to furnish about 25 thousand cubic feet of concrete for the bridge, the Gundlach company had built a ready-mix plant in nearby Ripley.

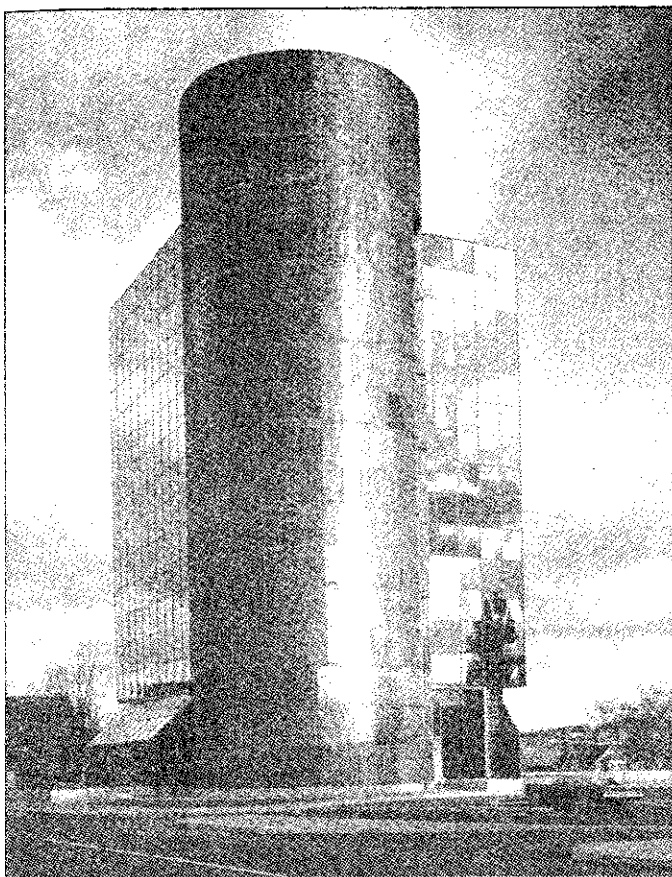
"We saw the long-term need for a plant to produce ready-mix for the four counties, for other users as well as ourselves," Gundlach said. During the heavy build-

ing at White Pine, an additional plant was built there. It no longer operates as a separate entity.

Projects continued, the Hancock senior center, and Tech's Civil Engineering Building. In 1968, contract for Tech's 13-story Mechanical Engineering Building went to Gundlach, followed by work on two additional high rises: the Chemistry Building, and the Electronical Engineering Building's superstructure, foundations, steel and floors.

The Gundlach company does whatever needs to be done to complete the job. The \$1.2 million physical education building at Suomi College in Hancock called for a 92-foot-long, 16-ton girder to run the length of the roof. Police escorting delivery of the giant girder caused heads to turn. The girder was trailer-trucked from Milwaukee to Hancock. It reached the length of a basketball court from nose of the rig to the tail of the beam. Upon its arrival, Suomi students and staff staged a cheering reception.

On Labor Day week-end of 1968, Bob Sturos walked into the Gundlach office and inquired for a bookkeeping job. He was a native of the Copper Country, working in downstate Michigan and looking for a way home. Since the beginning of employment in 1969, he has remained



The wood, copper, glass and steel Detroit and Northern Savings & Loan building beside Portage Canal was a study in contrasts.

a constant anchor of the office as a vice president and controller.

"I got wrapped up in all the financial affairs. I grew with the job," he said. Most Gundlach employees do.

Project bidding remained competitive. Champion, Inc., another family-owned construction service company in Iron Mountain, was normally among the bidders.

"As long as I can remember, since I was a child, the Gundlach company was always looked at as the competitor," said Champion President Bill Verrette. "The chances of our doing business in the Copper Country were always reduced because of Herman and his company being there. Their close working relationship with the state, mines, and universities, made them a formidable competitor."

In 1971 Dan LeVeque and his wife Rosemary both graduated from Michigan Tech and searched for jobs in the Copper Country that they loved. With jobs scarce, Dan finally interviewed in St. Paul and was accepted. They found an apartment, paid the surety, and came

back home to pack. Then Gundlach called and invited Dan to apply.

"Mr. Gundlach offered me a part-time job at something like \$3 an hour with no guarantees, and I took it. I never worked part time — ever," he said. LeVeque is now President of Gundlach Champion, Inc. Construction Services.

Although LeVeque may have drawn a lucky break with his first interview, employment at Gundlach does not come easy. "We sweat blood before we hire anybody, because we expect the people we hire to be here forever," he said.

Experience is essential when constructing buildings such as the home office of Detroit & Northern Savings and Loan (D&N) in Hancock. The eight-story modernistic structure is a reflection of the copper and lumber booms across the Upper Peninsula that gave D&N its start in 1889. A mirror-like glass cube and an adjacent copper-covered cylinder of the same height rise against the sky, with one-inch-thick glass reflecting the Portage Canal and surrounding landscape.

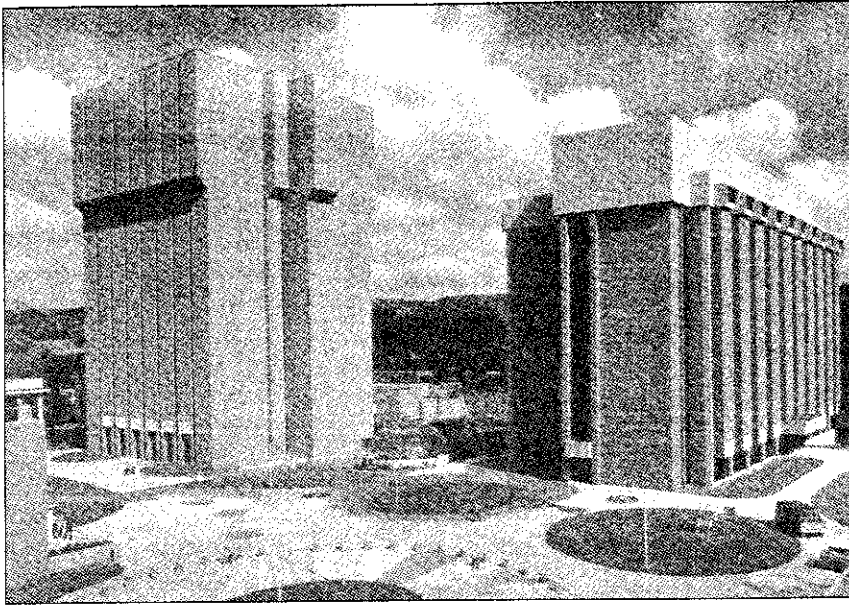
Gundlach construction reflects progress across the Copper Country, the peninsula and the Great Lakes states. In the mid-1970s, Gundlach projects were underway on the iron mines of Marquette County. Gundlach also was building a new power plant for UPPCO at Marquette. A Hoerner-Waldorf mill was going up at Ontonagon.

In 1973, the Michigan Chapter, Associated General Contractors of America, Inc., chose Herman Gundlach as its president. Later, present chapter Executive Vice President Bart Carrigan recalled his first meeting with Gundlach.

"I was introduced to Herman Gundlach in 1985 by Bill Verrette, President of Champion, Inc., at Iron Mountain who was then AGC President," Carrigan recalled. "Bill Verrette referred to Mr. Gundlach, who was of course one of Champion's competitors in the commercial construction market, as 'one of the fiercest competitors, yet a man for whom I have the utmost respect and admiration.'"

"I was taken aback by the kind words, but as the years played out, I began to understand Bill's words were richly deserved. I know of few others for whom the term 'gentleman' more truly applies than Herman Gundlach."

While the Gundlach company had come a long way toward working around storms, cold and snow, weather



The Mechanical Engineering/Engineering Mechanics Building (left) and Chemical & Biological Science Building (right) brought high rise construction to the campus of Michigan Tech.

remained a gamble. During the 1978 construction of Michigan Tech's Athletic Complex, the gales of November that normally besiege Lake Superior held at bay as day after day dawned clear and bright. Ready mix concrete trucks kept rolling. Crews poured yards and yards, thousands of yards of concrete into footings that snaked in all directions from the arena. Steel girders arrived, plastic encased the site, and crews were assured of work through another winter.

In the 1970s, Gundlach undertook a number of design-and-build projects in which they were able to do design work and contracting work on a turn-key basis. Such was the Ontonagon Shipyard. Warren Monberg recalls the time pressure riding on the project.

"One day three people came into the office and talked about their vision with the State of Michigan to build barges and tugs as cross-lake ferries on Lake Michigan between Wisconsin to Michigan. They were looking to us to build the shipyard, and came up with what I thought was an impossible construction schedule, especially when no money had yet been secured. Then much to my amazement, they produced the financing."

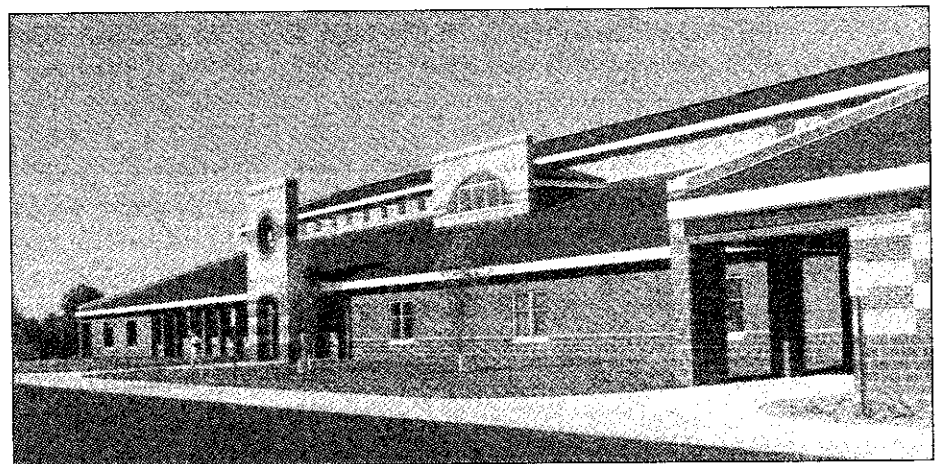
Gundlach produced design, engineering, and installation in 11 1/2 months, 10 1/2 days ahead of schedule! Although the barge and tug transportation plan in itself was never realized, Gundlach had completed its job as contracted.

For the most part, the 1980's saw a continuation of their long-established customers. These were slower years, with the downturn in the economy in the Upper Peninsula. Gundlach crews constructed Michigan Tech's \$20 million student development complex with a total of 161,000 square feet. The complex included a 3,500-seat gymnasium with two Olympic-size swimming pools and more.

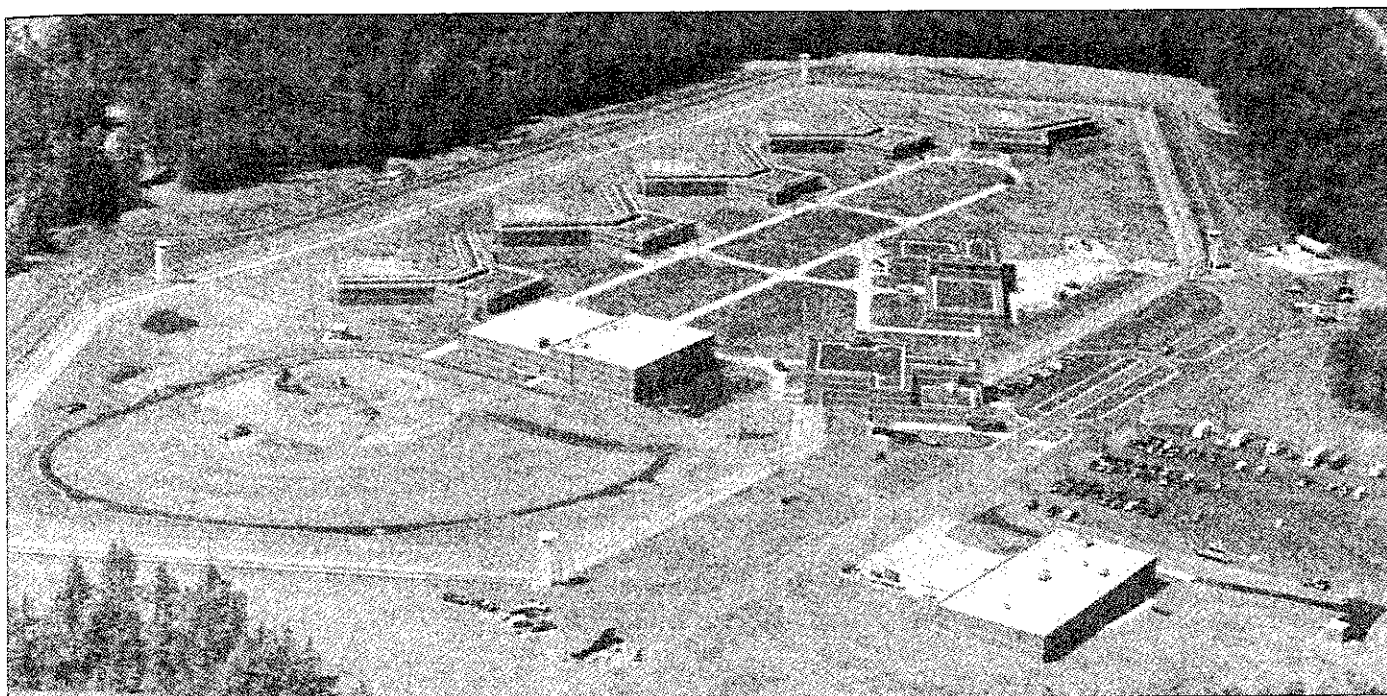
Ontonagon saw need of space which a new County Courthouse could afford. They contracted with the same company that had constructed their courthouse in 1898. Gundlach renovated the Houghton National Bank, installed a water treatment plant at St. Ignace, built additional student dormitories at Suomi, and housing for the Keweenaw Bay Tribe of Chippewa Indians on Keweenaw Bay at L'Anse.

In 1983, Barbara Kettle Gundlach, wife of Herman Gundlach for 45 years, died of cancer.

That year, Herman Gundlach, Inc. contracted for the renovation of the Douglass House in Houghton. The senior Herman Gundlach had rescued the handsome hotel after a fire had threatened to level its three stories in 1901. Eighty three years later, his son renovated the



Schools across the Copper Country were built by Gundlach crews, such as the Hancock Elementary School in 1989.



Alger Maximum Correctional Facility at Munising was a joint venture of Herman Gundlach, Inc. and Champion, Inc..

landmark to senior citizen housing, preserving its ornate woodwork and exterior carvings.

Times were changing. Herman Gundlach looked toward retirement with more golf and leisure hours with his four daughters, grandchildren and friends.

In 1988, Herman Gundlach, Inc. undertook a joint venture with Champion, Inc. in the construction of the state's \$43 million Alger Maximum Correctional Facility near Munising. The project involved the construction of five maximum security housing units with 88 cells each and four support buildings on an 80 acre site. The project was completed under budget.

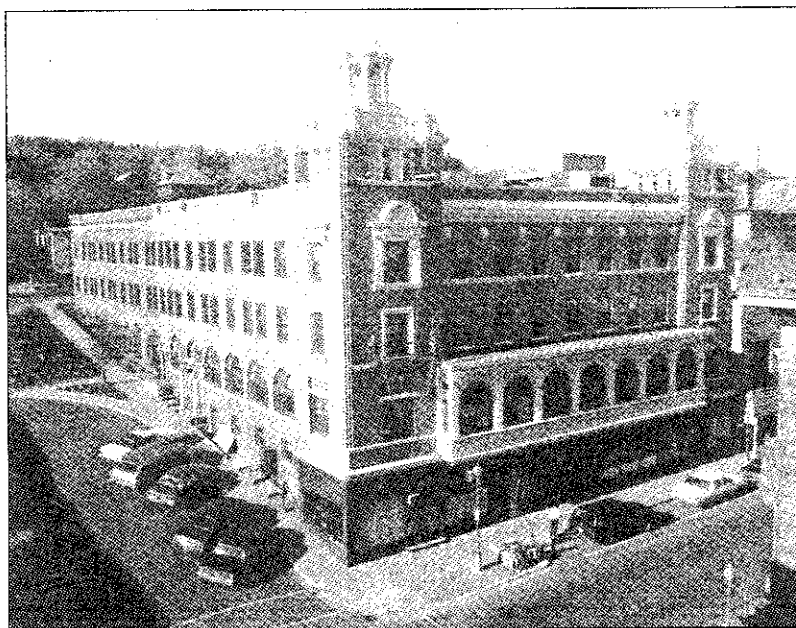
At the same time, the Gundlach company was building the Hancock Elementary School. The beautiful structure won recognition from the National Institute of Masonry.

In 1989, the baton of orchestrated construction passed from Herman Gundlach, Inc., to Champion, Inc.. Looking back, Gundlach paid tribute to the many, the thousands, of great and conscientious employees.

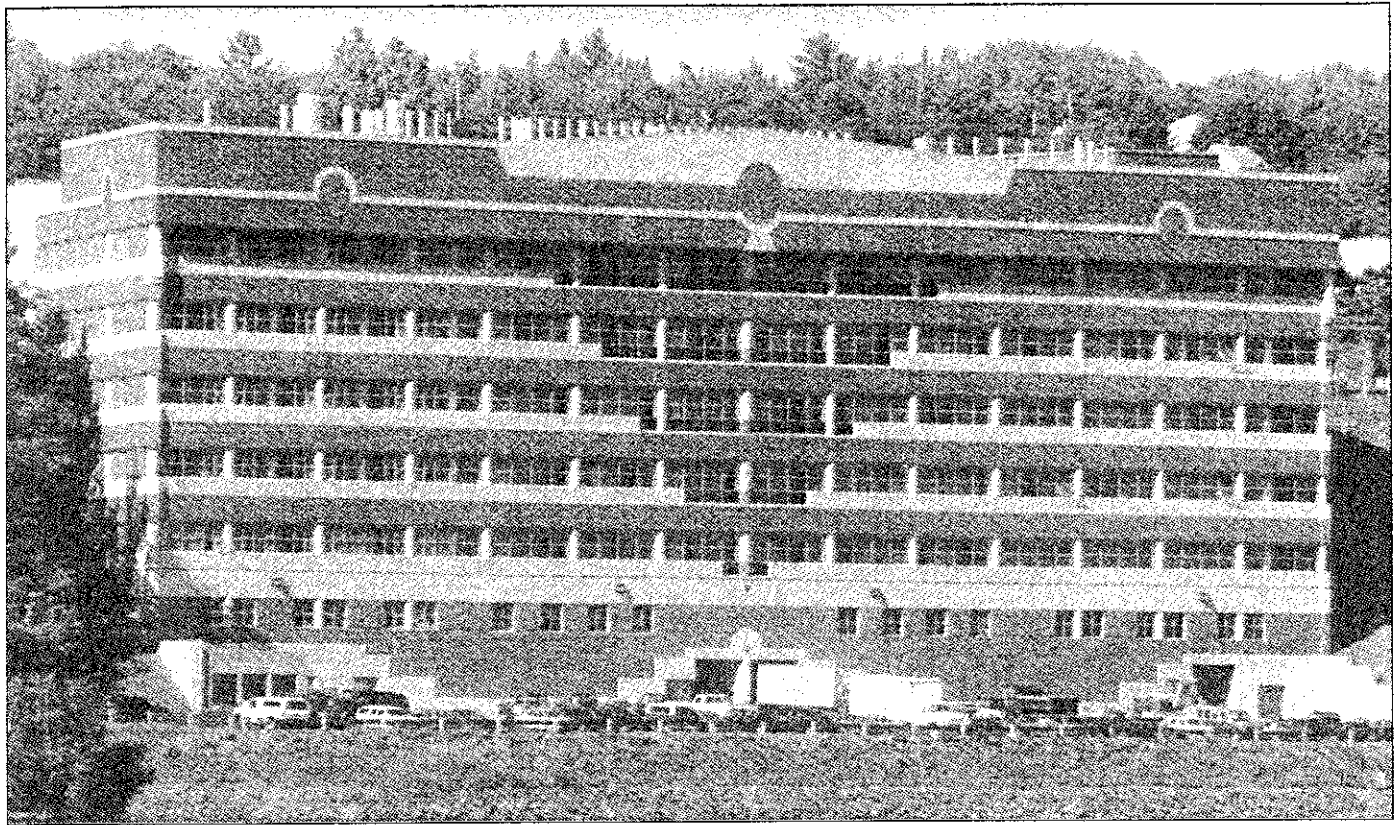
"They are too numerous to mention by name," he said. "But in the very beginning, there were renowned superintendents including Emil Tikkanen, Bill Brown, Al Proksch,

Bert Froney, and Sam McCance. In the office was Bob Bunt, Minerva and Irving Gitzen, and Ray Satterly.

"I pay special recognition to Charles Ahlstrom, our Vice President, Chief Engineer and Estimator from 1947 to 1962, and Don Schaible who served as Chief Executive and former President."



After a 1901 fire, Herman Gundlach, Sr., restored Houghton's Douglass House; Herman Gundlach, Jr., restored it again in 1984.



Gundlach Champion, Inc. points with pride to Michigan Tech University's Metallurgical and Minerals Building at Houghton.

The acquisition by Champion, Inc. marked a new beginning for two corporate families with long histories in the construction trades, pledged to working together to provide their customers, their longtime friends, with the very best of services.



BUILDING ON TRUST AND SERVICE - 1990-1998

For awhile after the Gundlach company was acquired by Champion, the Iron Mountain-based company operated Herman Gundlach, Inc. separate from Champion, Inc..

"In operating both companies, we had a large combined staff during a period of time when business was declining," said Verrette. "It became obvious that at some point the companies had to be combined. We did

this in 1993."

Recognizing the longtime presence of the Gundlach company in Houghton and Champion's presence in Iron Mountain, Verrette made the decision to leave the locations as they were.

"Both companies have been family-owned businesses for many years; being able to maintain a presence in the locations of both seemed important to me," he said. In recognition of their accomplishments, Verrette also combined both business names into Gundlach Champion, Inc.. In May 1996, Dan LeVeque was named president.

An experienced staff of managers, engineers, estimators, safety personnel and field supervisors assures clients that complete and complex construction projects will be completed efficiently and on time.

The newly-organized company continued doing business with longtime friends, including Michigan Tech University, Northern Michigan University, Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Co., and so many more. Work projects continue in Minnesota, especially along the iron range. Gundlach Champion also searches out new clients.

The construction services company participates in all areas of construction development including general contracting, boiler repair, pollution control, engineering, on-site inspection, quality control, construction management, partnering agreements, architectural design, ownership representation and other needs. Project delivery systems include competitive bids, joint ventures, project management, budget estimates, design building, and other client needs.

"The longevity of relationships with our clients is remarkable," LeVeque said. "We've worked with them for so many years that none of the people who started these bonds are there anymore. The bond between our company and our clients is so strong that it bridges personal relationships. This tie has withstood the span of time."

This bond of trust and service brought the contract to Gundlach Champion for Michigan Tech's \$44 million Environmental Sciences and Engineering Building. The 167,000-square-foot teaching and research facility is set for completion in 1998.

LeVeque said the construction industry has changed drastically in the last few years.

"Before, everything was hard-dollar, competitive bidding," he said. Monberg said the industry worked with the understanding that time was money. "Low bidder" were the key words. The main objective was "to bring the job in on budget and certainly on time or prior to."

LeVeque said in hard-dollar bidding with heavy concerns to maximize profits, contractors could grow less concerned for owner and the owner's interest.

"That's a short-sighted approach. When we're looking to work with our clients for another hundred years, we have to look for a better way of doing business. Our way is to work in partnership with the owners to develop a more personal relationship, to recognize their needs and to respond to those needs. We pride ourselves on not differentiating between the two. We hope our customers recognize that service is just as important as the price, and maybe more so," LeVeque said.

Building For The Future

He feels confident that Gundlach Champion, Inc. can move into the next hundred years still providing the level of service the owner needs at a competitive price.

Bill Verrette, President of Champion, Inc., expressed confidence that under the leadership of LeVeque, the future of Gundlach Champion, Inc. is secure. "When

we look to the future and what it will take to compete, I feel we are going in the right direction in scheduling and bidding software, job management software and other equipment we have in place," he said.

A construction company's success rides on its people, from the field workers to front-line supervisors to the general management of the company.

"We have this strength and leadership," Verrette said. "I look forward to where we are headed with great anticipation."

As Gundlach Champion, Inc. moves forward, the company takes note of its history, while trusting to future generations of this corporate family to lead well into the next hundred years.

"Our past is what has brought us to this point in our corporate life," LeVeque said. "As we move ahead, we take with us the principles ingrained into this company, the integrity, the strong work ethic and all that we have gained from our past. Everything that came before us provides stepping stones to the future."



FOUNDED IN 1898

DESIGN

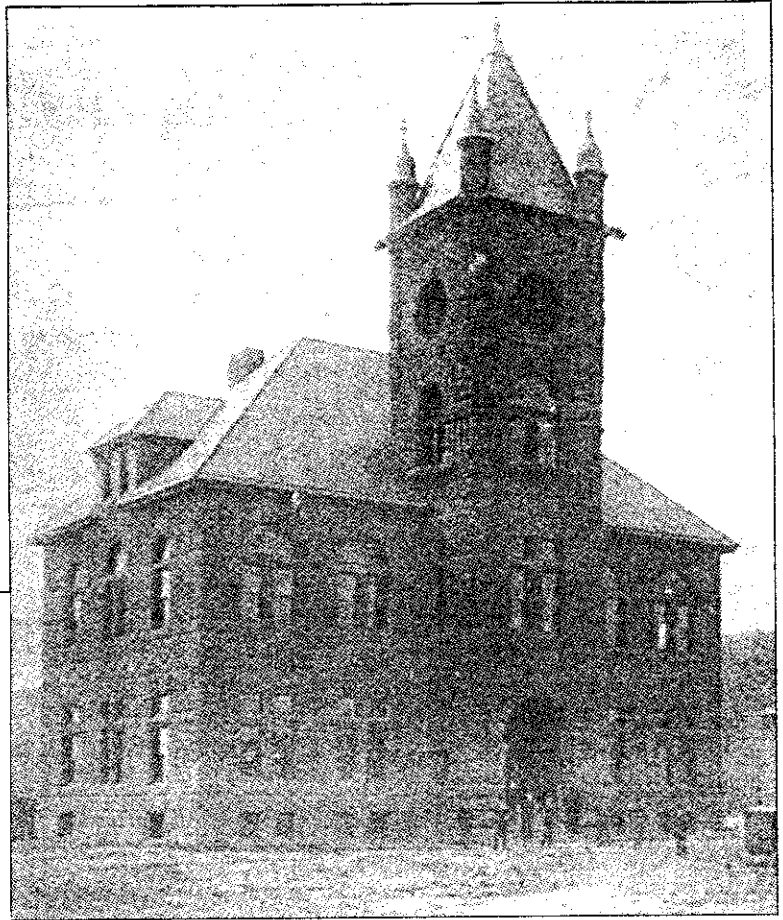
- ▶ Bechtel Group, San Francisco, Calif.
- ▶ Burns & McDonnell Engineers - Architects- Consultants, Kansas City, Mo.

CONSTRUCTION

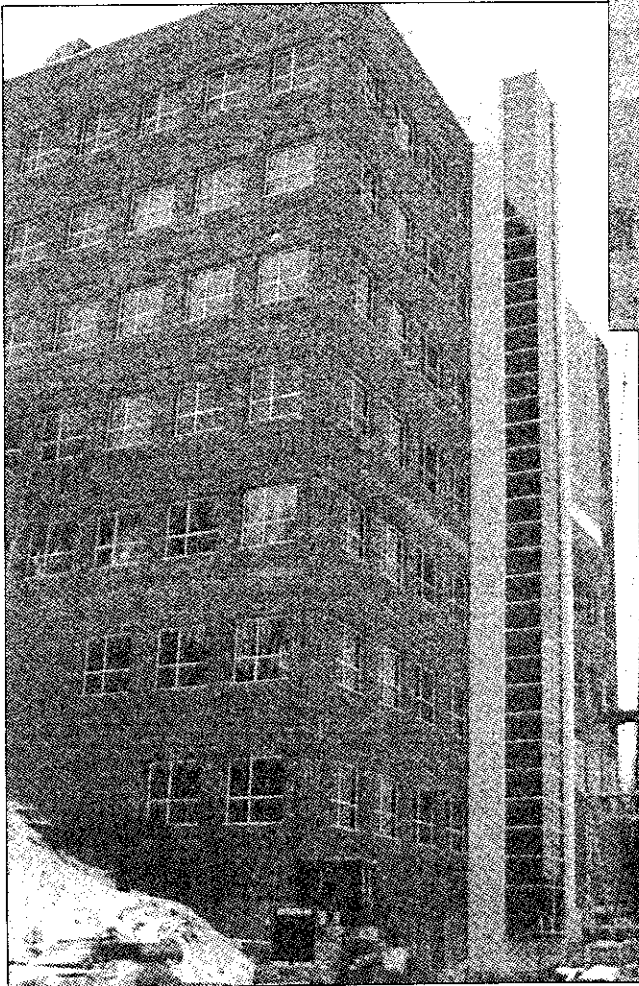
- ▶ Bechtel Group, San Francisco, Calif.
- ▶ Gundlach Champion, Inc., Houghton, Mich.
- ▶ Younglove Construction Co., Sioux City, Iowa (subsidiary of W.A. Kilinger, Inc., Sioux City, Iowa)

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From 1898....



The Gogebic County Courthouse (above) was one of Herman Gundlach's early projects in 1898.



Michigan Tech University's 167,000 square foot Environmental Sciences and Engineering Building, one of Gundlach Champion's present projects, is set to be completed in 1998.

....To 1998.