

# RUPPE DEPARTMENT STORE ca. 1870



NPS, Keweenaw NHP, Petermann GP#383 Union Building ca. 1910 by Myrno Petermann

Peter Ruppe Jr. opened the Calumet branch of Ruppe & Sons in 1869. The existing building was first constructed after the Red Jacket fire of 1870. It was originally only two stories tall. In 1899 a third story and a new store front were constructed to keep up with growing demand and competition from other stores, such as Vertin's Department Store on Oak Street.

The Ruppe's success in the mercantile business allowed them to invest in banks and mining companies, and they were active in local government. In 1923 the Ruppe family sold the building to the JC Penny Company, which moved from a smaller location in Calumet. In 1980 JC Penny's moved to the new Copper Country Mall in Houghton, and closed both the store in Calumet, and a store in downtown Houghton. Though briefly occupied by a fitness center, the Ruppe building has mostly remained vacant since then.

**P. RUPPE  
& SON,**  
General Merchandise  
213-217 Fifth St., Calumet, Mich.  
Established 1869.  
Dry Goods, Clothing, Furniture, Hats and Caps,  
Shoes, Gents' Furnishings.  
**We Handle the Best Groceries**  
That Money Can Buy.  
A Full Line of the Celebrated F. Mayer Shoes  
for Children.  
Sole Agents for "Queen Quality" Ladies  
Footwear.

NPS, Keweenaw NHP, KHVM Masons 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1920

In 1913 this imposing building was occupied by a large department store called P. Ruppe and Sons. Many people shopped here for groceries, clothing, furniture, and other household necessities.

**RED JACKET 1913 – WINDOWS INTO THE PAST**