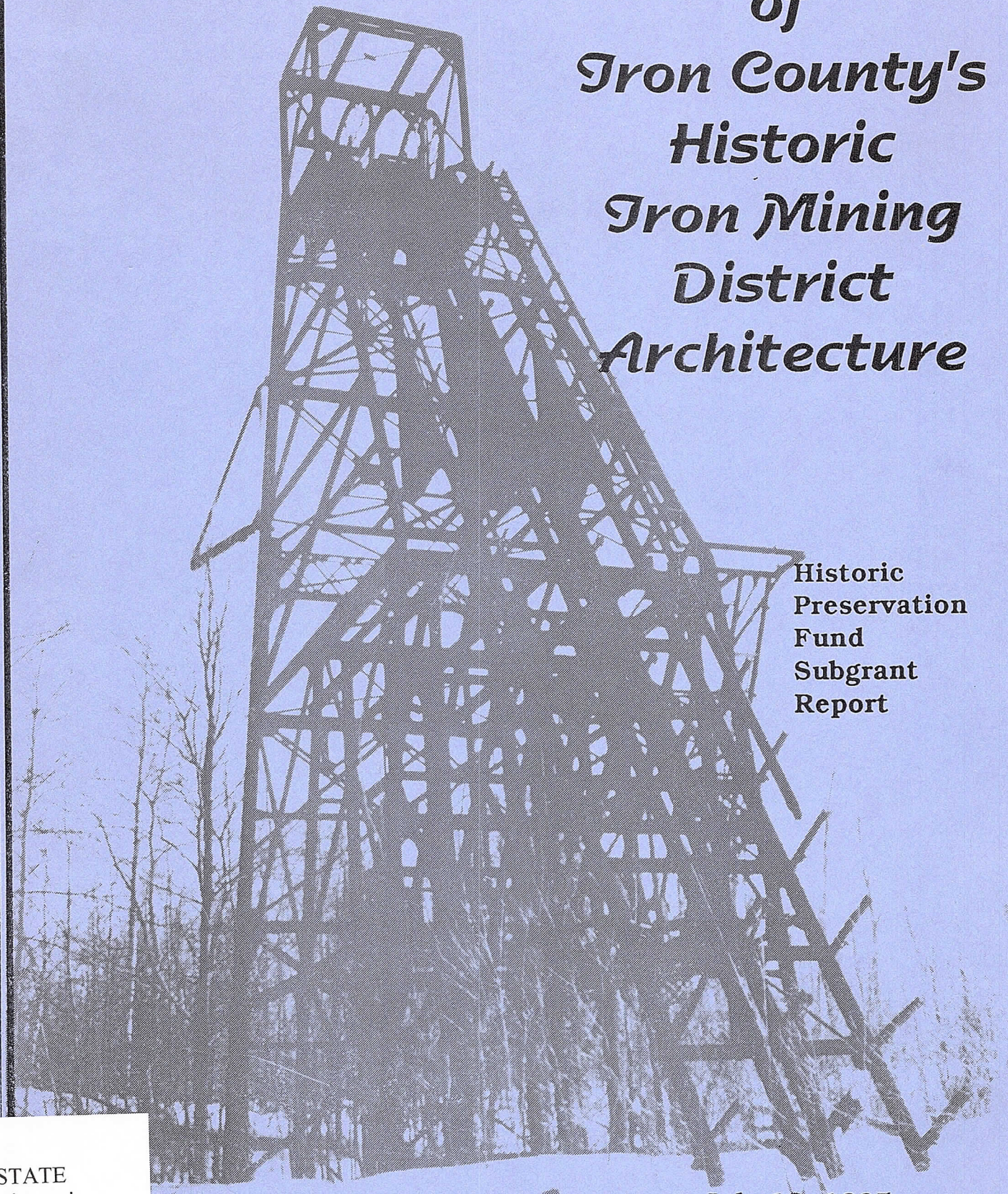
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Preservation of Iron County's Historic Iron Mining District Architecture



Historic Preservation Fund Subgrant Report

July 13, 1995

STATE
Wisconsin

Iron County Mining District Report

For
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Division of Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Sub-Grant # 55-94-90067-12

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IRON COUNTY MINING DISTRICT REPORT- FINAL

The following is a comprehensive final report on a proposed Historic Mining District of Iron County, Wisconsin.

The main goal of this report is to address the six points of criteria contained in the Iron County Mining District Outline, with a particular emphasis on substantiation of historic extant properties associated with Iron County mining. Additional sections of this report that follow include detailed research for each site and recommendations on the District perspective.

I. Criteria Used for Site Selection

The six categories of criteria established for site selection:

1. historical significance
2. site in relation to the district's theme
3. public safety and accessibility to site visitation
4. site integrity
5. potential public interest in the site
6. sites with best opportunity to reveal the impact of area iron mining to the public

The five sites constituting the district which this report will examine in more detail are: Hurley, Gile, Montreal, Pence and the Plummer Headframe.

II. Initial Documentation of the District's Historic Significance

HURLEY

- *Historical significance in relation to the district*

A great deal of Hurley's history is based as much on stigma and misunderstanding as it is on hard facts. Almost from its very beginning, the focus has tended to be on Hurley's frontier attitude and "untameness". Statements to the effect that "the three worst places on earth are Hurley, Hayward and Hell, Hurley being toughest of the lot, have helped keep its "wild open" aura alive. Prostitution, prohibition and gambling put Hurley on the map and have kept it there, even though it is now in legend only.

Walking and tavern tours have shown that people are still unquenchably curious about the history of Hurley's tarnished past and the remnants of Hurley's variety theater/saloon district buildings that still exist. From the extreme east end of Silver Street, starting from the Chicago and Northwestern railroad bridge to the start of 2nd Avenue, buildings and businesses that capture the flavor of old Hurley can be experienced.

The Mahogany Ridge Bar, 29 Silver St., with its superb back bar and overall historic ambience, is an excellent example of Hurley's so-called "saloon heritage". Several buildings along what is known as Hurley's "Lower Block" include unique interior architectural design used to complement their use as brothels or fronts for prohibition and gambling.

Many other facets of Hurley's history have tended to be ignored, these being as equally legitimate as the town's "untamed" side. The vast majority of Hurley's population, given any year, was hard-working, law-abiding and family oriented. From its very start, Hurley was a town with a very progressive attitude, that overcame a series of profound tribulations that threatened its very existence.

For example, the fires of 1887 almost destroyed Hurley's entire business district along with sizable chunks of its residential area. It's questionable as to how many towns the size of Hurley could have survived and gone on after such profound destruction.

The first building to be erected in the Hurley area, was a small shanty constructed by H. Surprise on October 15, 1884. The town itself took its name from Mr. M.A. Hurley. Hurley was a prominent Wausau attorney who won an important lawsuit for the Northern Chief Iron Co. which also had interests in the area. His compensation for winning the suit was a request for the town site in question to be named after himself.

Hurley, in its early history, was the real hub for the most important business being transacted on the Penokee-Gogebic Range. It was so influential in early mining ventures, that Hurley had its own stock exchange. Important entrepreneurs, like John E. Burton, came to Hurley to invest in mining and other ventures including early Hurley's business district. He constructed the huge 100 room Burton House Hotel, in 1889, at a cost of $100,000 hotel. Unfortunately, the magnificent structure was lost to fire in 1947.

Much of Hurley's historic architecture still exists. Most of these structures are in a fine state of preservation. One of the oldest standing buildings in Hurley is the present day structure located on the corner of Silver Street and 2nd Avenue. Constructed sometime during the late-1880s, this building was originally known as the Richard's Block. Sometime during the 1890s the dry-goods business of Brill and Langdon moved into the building. Langdon soon left the business and it became known as I. Brill's Son. The building also housed McConnell Hardware as well as photo studios, legal offices and other professions on its second floor. The building has changed very little over the years and its original architectural integrity has been well preserved.

One of the most unique examples of well preserved early Hurley architecture can be seen in the "Flat Iron Building" also known as the "Bon Ton". This structure is located at the extreme west end of Silver Street at the intersection of 5th Avenue. The building is highly unique. It was designed to accommodate the irregular shaped property, created by the angulation of railroad tracks that it borders. The building is wider at its east end than its west giving it a triangular appearance.

The building that preceded the present structure was also known as the "Bon Ton." Both structures were quite similar in appearance and both retained their unique shape. The main entrance on the first structure was on its western end, but on the second structure, the entrance was located on its side.

The first structure was owned by a Mr. Carpenter and was destroyed in Hurley's big fire of July 9, 1887. The building's name "Flat Iron" is probably in reference to an engineering or architectural term. Its other name, "Bon Ton", is probably in reference to its similarity in appearance to its predecessor.

The "Flat Iron" was the location where the final paper work required of new immigrants, arriving by passenger train to Hurley, was processed. Here new arrivals found information about their new community. As time passed, this building also served in the capacities of saloon, barbershop (in its west end addition), a bus station, and a host of other things.

The second Bon Ton/Flat Iron building was constructed by Mr. Carpenter shortly after the destruction of his first building. He then sold it to Constantine and Florian Erspamer in 1895. Later, Constantine became its sole owner. The building sustained some damage during the Klondike Theater fire of November 24, 1901, but was quickly repaired.

In 1912, Andy Erspamer built an addition to the western side and end of the building, which was used as a barbershop for quite a number of years. The building was also known as the "Point" at this time. Later, "Basswood Joe" Rostollan and then Al Westlund also ran this part of the building as a barbershop. For years the saloon aspect of the building was run by Constantine Erspamer, later it was turned over to Robert Erspamer.

In more recent times the old "Flat Iron" building was owned by Albert Constantini who in turn sold it to Earl Gingery. In early 1976, Mr. Gingery completely renovated the old barbershop area of the building and transformed it into a restaurant. The building is presently known as "Sneakers Bar and Grill". It retains its original shape and much of its architectural character, although the one story piece on the building's front appears to be a much later addition.

Other buildings in Hurley, constructed in approximately the same era, have also managed to retain much of their original appearance. The architectural facades on most of these Silver Street buildings are not only well preserved, but are enhanced with well thought-out color schemes. The general impression gained by the neutral observer is that Hurley is decisively allowing its historic buildings to compliment its overall business district, which in turn is highly complimentary to the heritage tourism industry being promoted.

Shortly after its completion in 1893, the Iron County Courthouse, 303 Iron St., was described as "too magnificent a structure for a town hall". Even viewing this structure

today, with its mammoth turreted clock tower, it is understandable as to why it was perceived as being magnificent over 100 years ago.

The total cost of the Iron County Courthouse was $32,917.04, $3,503.55 for the building site, $16,200 for the building contract, and $13,213.49 for extras. Many tax conscious local taxpayers complained that the clock tower, which also housed the fire bell, was an extravagance.

On March 3, 1893, the Wisconsin Legislature passed an act creating Iron County from portions of what was then a much larger Ashland County. At its formation, Iron County was divided into three townships. These included the Town of Vaughn, which included Hurley, Dogwood, and Knight. Each of these areas were quite large and in time were divided further into 10 townships. The Town of Vaughn lost its name on November 18, 1919, when Hurley became a city. On April 3, 1894, the Town of Vaughn sold the Town Hall to Iron County for $32,000.00.

Iron County's old courthouse received its fair share of renovating. The front of the building originally had a ramp and a large doorway to accommodate the community's horse drawn fire wagons. At one time, the structure housed the county jail, with the turnkey and family residing within the building itself.

In 1973, Iron County's government moved into a new structure. Members of the Iron County Historical Society requested that the county board consider turning the building over to their group so that it could be used as a museum. The Iron County Historical Society officially received the deed to the old Iron County Courthouse on November 24, 1976. The structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places in July of 1977. The building is situated in such a way that it can be viewed from each approach to the City of Hurley. The clock tower facade is lighted at night creating a dramatic backdrop to the downtown.

Hurley also reflects a fine history in its church architecture as is seen in its First Presbyterian Church, at the corner of Copper Street and 4th Ave. S. The building was constructed as a wooden structure in 1886 and presently sheathed in an attractive limestone, and in its St. Mary's Catholic Church, 404 Iron St., constructed in 1906. The same can be said for its school buildings such as the old J.E. Murphy High School, 100 Poplar St., constructed in 1915. The Iron County Memorial Building, 209 Iron St., also presents itself as another fine architectural achievement.

The most important mine in the immediate proximity of Hurley was the Germania. The mine's history begins with the discovery, in 1882, of ore deposits just south of Hurley on what is now known as Germania Hill. The Hayes brothers began operation of the Germania Mine in 1885 and the first train-load of 13 cars of iron ore was shipped to Ashland's newly built docks on July 13, 1885. This particular event does have some historic significance in the sense that it was the first ore ever to be shipped to these docks. In March of 1890, a terrible fire occurred underground in the Germania and took the lives of five of its miners. The mine ultimately closed in 1912, having shipped a

total of 470,269 tons of ore.

No architectural features remain of the Germania Mine. The actual location of the mine, southwest of the corner of Hematite St. and 5th Ave. S, is easily accessible and could be developed as an interpretative site.

The significance of Hurley's history needs to be considered for more than its "untamed past". At its inception it was an important railroad terminus of the ore shipment from the entire Gogebic Range, especially to Ashland's docks. Early on, it was also a chief commercial center for the region and acted as a supply base for local mining ventures.

- *Relationship of Individual Site to Overall Theme of the District*

The city of Hurley could act as a superb introduction to the remainder of the Iron County Mining District, essentially acting as the "front door" to the historic interpretation of the area.

Hurley is the extreme eastern starting point for the Wisconsin side of the Penokee-Gogebic Range's mining heritage. Hurley's Silver Street was Iron County's center of activity in the past. With a variety of historic building stock still intact which architecturally represent a wide slice of life in a booming mining town, coupled with its lingering notoriety, a finer "preface" for the interpretation of the district's mining history could not be found.

- *Public Safety and Accessibility in Relation to Site Visitation*

Hurley's historic architectural resources are highly accessible and safe for public viewing through a variety of modes including walking, viewing by auto, and bike tours. Most of these resources are located on or adjacent to Silver Street, Hurley's main thoroughfare. Most historic buildings are businesses or public buildings.

Entering Hurley via its famous Silver Street, the visitor is also automatically entering the Iron County Mining District. This experience could be used to encourage travellers to visit the remainder of historic sites within the district.

- *Integrity of the Site*

The historic ambiance of Hurley's famous Silver Street will enrich, compliment and enhance the overall district of Hurley and could ultimately act as a "lynch pin" on which the remainder of the district interpretation could revolve. A variety of fine architectural examples exist, representing multiple facets of the community's past, that can be used to interpret what life was really like in the "wide open" mining town of Hurley.

- *Public Interest In Relation to the Site*

The public's fascination in Hurley's past has not diminished over the years. Marketing to increase the public's interest to visit Hurley's historic Silver Street has been evolving over a span of years. It essentially remains a resource waiting to be tapped for its historic potential. A great deal of Hurley's present day tourism awareness is due to special community events such as the Paavo Nurmi Marathon, snowmobile rallies, and Annual Heritage Festival. These and other events can be highly complimentary to district awareness and encourage more visitation for heritage tourism.

The success of the first historic tavern and walking tours of Hurley, conducted during the summer of 1994, suggest that there is strong public interest in experiencing Hurley's historic past by viewing its historic architecture.

There is excellent potential to market Hurley's history to compliment Iron County's developing heritage tourism industry. Once visitors become exposed to Hurley's historic district, they will be tempted to experience the remainder of the historic sites. Local service personnel need to be trained to the encourage visitors to experience Hurley's history and other district sites. High quality signage and literature in relation to Hurley's history will also need to be coordinated with other forms of district promotions.

- *Define Sites Offering Best Opportunities of Revealing the Impact of Area Iron Mining*

The following architectural structures and historic sites are recommended as having the greatest potential for interpreting the impact of area iron mining and the people and resources of the district:

Richard's Block Building
Hurley's "Lower Block"- Theater/Variety Club Buildings
Flat Iron Building
Site of the Burton House Hotel
Old Iron County Courthouse
First Presbyterian Church
St. Mary's Church
Germania Mine site

GILE

- *Historical Significance*

A short distance west of Hurley is the community of Gile. Early on this area was known for the lush timber stands along the banks of the Gile River, also known as the West

Branch of the Montreal. The Fifield Mill was one of the first lumbering operations in the area, beginning its cut in the early 1880's. Much of the early logging was done where the present day City of Montreal is located.

Henry Meade started logging operations there in 1886 and continued until 1898. Meade purchased all the standing timber in the area, which, when logged, was sold directly to the mining company at Montreal to supply shoring timbers and building materials. After twelve years of continuous logging, all the timber within the immediate mining district had been cleared. Meade's operations in the area closed. Shortly after, in 1900, the town of Montreal was organized which incorporated the community of Gile within its boundaries. The tracts of land that had just been logged were quickly cleared and a variety of dwellings constructed for those coming to the area to work in the mines.

While Montreal developed as a mining community, Gile continued as a thriving lumbering hamlet during the late 1880's. Gile was named after Gordon H. Gile, a noted timber cruiser from the Wausau area. By 1890, Gile possessed its own school, non-denominational church, mill store, several saloons, and a dance hall. There were also a number of make shift "sleeping shanties" and boarding houses which provided lodging for mill hands whose families had yet to arrive.

There are discrepancies as to the formation of the Montreal River Lumber Company, a business whose operation that had the most profound impact on Gile's history. Most sources state that Dave McCrossen started the Company in 1885. They also state that its operations eventually extended from Sand Rock and around Pine Lake to Montreal. Logs were floated down the West Branch of the Montreal River (Gile River) to the mill at Gile. These sources also state that the mill at Gile was later owned by B. Norman and that it ultimately burned to the ground in 1907. Other multiple sources state that "Mike" McCrossen began the Montreal River Lumber Company mill at Gile in 1897 and that it continued its operation there until 1905, when it was dismantled and moved to Wausau, Wisconsin.

By 1904, most of the valuable virgin pine in the entire area had been cut over. Many of the lumberjacks that had worked for area mills now left to work elsewhere. Others became miners. In 1909, Norman moved a small mill from the town of Upson to the West Branch of the Montreal River in Gile. Operations at this mill were relatively small and continued until 1915 when the mill burned to the ground. After this mill closed, Gile's history became inextricably linked to the mines near by.

In 1941, the Lake Superior District Power Company dam was built on the West Branch of the Montreal River, approximately where the old Montreal River Lumber Company mill dam had been, creating the Gile Flowage.

From Gile, particularly from the picturesque Gile Falls Overlook, the enormous ore tailing piles of the Montreal Mine can be viewed. Their size is quite impressive and yet they seem to blend beautifully into their immediate surroundings.

- *Relationship of the Site to the Overall Theme of the District*

Gile's sawmill heritage, as supplier for timber used in construction of the iron ore mines, superbly compliments the mining heritage of neighboring Montreal and broadens the scope of the District's theme to include other resources impacted by mining.

- *Public Safety and Accessibility*

Public access to this site is excellent due to its close proximity to Highway 77. Gile's major architectural features can be viewed from village streets and are easily accessed in a variety of modes including by walking, auto, or bike.

- *Historic Integrity of the Site*

Structures of some bearing still exist as reminders of Gile's small, but once thriving main street. A somewhat impressive structure known as the "GIFA Center", located on Nimikon St., still exists. Originally built in 1926, this building acted as Gile's Coolidge School. At the end of the 1960s, it was purchased and renovated for use as a meeting place and social center. The building was eventually acquired by the Gile Flowage Association, a non-profit organization and renamed the GIFA Center. It presently functions as a social center.

The primary historic resource are the large tailing stock piles as viewed from the Gile Falls Overlook. They present an excellent connection to the area iron mining industry of the past and yet they also seem to blend beautifully into their immediate surroundings. The awesome size of the tailing piles reminds the viewer of the significance of iron mining and the immense impact that it had on the resources and communities of the Penokee Range.

- *Public Interest in Relation to the Site*

The ability to view the large ore tailing stockpiles of the Montreal Mine from the Gile Falls Overlook offers the greatest potential to attract the public to this site. No where else in Wisconsin can such large stockpiles of mine rock be seen, attesting to the huge amount of resources what were extracted from the Montreal Mine-- claimed to be the deepest iron ore mine in the world.

- *Sites Offering the Best Opportunities to Reveal the Impact of the Iron Mining District*

Montreal Iron Ore Tailing Stockpiles from Gile Falls Overlook

MONTREAL

- *Historical Significance*

The present day City of Montreal is a combination of the communities of Montreal and Gile. The mineral industry in the Montreal area began about 1884 after six years of reconnaissance and exploration by land owners and geologists. These explorations left numerous shallow pits and deeper shafts scattered near the summit of the north slopes of the hills that make up the southern extension of the Gogebic Range.

The Montreal Mining company, a subsidiary of Oglebay, Norton and Co., acquired six of these small explorations and developed them. By 1886, a total of 57,507 tons of ore had been shipped from these explorations and were showing no indications of exhaustion. It is almost certain that this first ore was shipped to Ashland docks. The original mines that constituted the greater Montreal Mine were the Moore, Section 33, Trimble, Jupiter, Bourne, and Ottawa.

In order to mine ore from increasingly greater depths, older shafts in the area had to be replaced by more modern, deeper shafts. These shafts were deepened again and again until No. 5 Auxiliary was 4,337 feet below the surface, reputedly making the Montreal Mine the deepest iron mine in the world. This shaft's extreme depth is quite impressive, but it is even more so when it is realized that eventually a steel headframe of 164 feet in height was required to leverage the equipment needed to extract its ore.

For years the Montreal Mine employed an average 700 persons, working both on the surface and underground, producing an annual output exceeding 1,000,000 tons of ore. The Montreal Mine was an active ore shipper from 1886 until August 10, 1962, when its operations ceased. Ultimately its final shipment was made from one of its stockpiles in 1963. The Montreal was the last iron ore mine to close on the Penokee Range and the second to last mine to close within the entire Wisconsin-Michigan mining district. The closure marked the end of a prosperous local economy driven by mining.

The first school classes held in the town of Montreal were conducted in one of the rooms of a local boarding house in 1888. This arrangement lasted several years and then the town's children were sent to a school in the town of Pence, a 1/2 mile west of Montreal. The children continued to attend the Pence school for two years and then in 1894 a one-room school house was constructed on the summit of Montreal Hill, a short distance west of a store owned by the Calvi family. Its first principal was Miss Sarah Nicholson who was followed by Charles Lennon and then by John Kirby. By the time George Sullivan arrived in 1907, the school had grown to a four-room building. Sullivan was ultimately replaced by Henry Walsh, who became the Montreal School's fifth principal. In 1915, a new brick building was constructed to replace the old wooden structure. It was located on top of a hill in what was later referred to as the "Old Location" of Montreal.

The Roosevelt School, 10 Michigan Ave. in Montreal, was built and was formally opened on November 26, 1926. The building was located at the base of Bourne Hill. George Sullivan, Sr., who had served at the old school years previously, became the principal of the new Montreal School. For years the children of Montreal were instructed through their first 8 grades via this school and then were transported to the Hurley High School to complete their education. Sullivan eventually retired in 1956 and was succeeded by Anton Calvi. A new school building was also constructed in Gile in 1926 (see Gile's GIFA Center), which grew out of a disagreement in 1925 as to where a new school building should be located.

The Roosevelt building still stands and appears to be in fine state of preservation. It currently houses Art Unlimited, a manufacturer of fleecewear garments.

The prominent benchmark in the political history of Montreal begin with an ordinance passed on March 2, 1900. On this date the Town of Montreal was created by order of the Iron County Board of Supervisors. R. E. Roberts was the first town chairman and the first town meetings were held in the jail building. On February 20, 1917, the Town of Montreal was incorporated as the "Village of Hamilton". The village form of government continued until 1924 when the electorate changed the village to a fourth class city and has been known since that time as the City of Montreal.

Montreal's first city hall was constructed in 1925 and contained both the city's jail and fire station. When the Montreal Mine closed, the building was purchased by private parties and went through some rather novel changes. It was remodeled into a set of unique apartments. A large center window replaced the original fire truck garage door. The building's old jail cells were ultimately remodeled into unusual bathrooms, with the bars still on their windows. It is presently used as a recreational home and has been well maintained. It is located at 82 Wisconsin Avenue.

Montreal's second city hall, 53 Wisconsin Ave., was constructed by the Oglebay Norton Mining Company as a company clinic in 1940. It was deeded to the municipality for use as a city hall following the closure of the Montreal Mine. It too, is in good repair, and houses City of Montreal offices and a community library.

Construction of Montreal's Hamilton Club started in 1918 as a recreational club for Oglebay Norton miners and their families. It was opened to the public on July 5, 1919. The entire cost of the construction, $65,023.22, was picked up by the Oglebay Norton Company of Cleveland, owners of the Montreal Mining Company. This 50' x 100' red brick structure was situated on a commanding location, surrounded by beautiful trees and lovely lawn. The original purpose of this building was to provide a place for amusement and recreation for the employees of the Montreal Mining Company and residents of Montreal. The "Club" was Montreal's hub of community activity. Special events, such as special Christmas parties, both for children and for the mine's employees and their spouses, were sponsored by the mining company.

The basement of the Hamilton Club was made of stone with a superstructure of brick. It contained a recreation room with pool tables, bowling alleys, a smoking room, barber shop, soda fountain and a kitchen; all with terrazzo floors. The entrance to the basement was from the main lobby and down a flight of stairs. From the main lobby, two entrances lead into an auditorium, which housed a fine stage with dressing rooms on either side. In its early years, the Hamilton Club's stage hosted minstrel shows which primarily employed local talent. In later years, movies were shown on the weekends for an admission fee of one dime.

Off the main lobby was a large office, which was originally intended to be used as a public library. It fulfilled this function for several years until the library was moved upstairs. From the lobby area were stairs accessing the upper floor, where the ladies restroom and lounging parlor were located. This lounging parlor was furnished with comfortable lounge chairs and long mirrors for primping. A large stone fireplace was set off in one corner of the room. In the building's early history, masked balls given in the auditorium were considered the social event of the year. Montreal's Roosevelt School also used the auditorium for programs, plays and even operettas.

After the closing of the Montreal Mine in 1962, the Hamilton Club building was donated to the Hurley First Presbyterian Church, which in turn sold it to John Galioto of Merrill, Wisconsin. Galioto transformed the building into a ski lodge and named it "Mountain Shadows". He soon renamed it "Hamilton Lodge" when he realized that many people had fond memories attached to the "Hamilton". The lodge was a popular place with young skiers during winter months so the owner added a bar and booked rock and roll bands. The Hamilton Lodge retained, in part, its grand tradition of a community center. Parties were hosted there for retarded children and dances given to generate funds for the Iron County Drum and Bugle Corps.

In the very early morning hours of July 27, 1968, the owners discovered a fire in a washroom of the Hamilton Club. The fire grew out of control and the Montreal and Hurley Fire Departments were called. In the end, not much could be done to save the building. It was considered almost a total loss. Ironically, the fire occurred on the 50th anniversary year of the Hamilton Club's construction. The cause of the blaze was never determined. Over the years, attempts were made to salvage and use the first floor of the building, but with the passage of time this intent faltered and the structure fell into neglect. Today it stands as almost a complete ruin, almost unrecognizable amongst the trees and over grown brush.

As accurately as can be determined, between 1918-1919, three other structures were constructed simultaneously with the Hamilton Club.

Directly west and in close proximity to the Hamilton Club ruin, stands what was the Montreal Mine's Machine Shop. This imposing, rectangular building housed mining equipment and tools for electricians, welders, and pipefitters. Presently the building stands in almost pristine condition and appears to be relatively unchanged since its initial construction. Vines and landscaping enhance the appearance of the building. Its walls

are of fieldstone and mortar. Recent brushing out of the area between the building and Highway 77 has increased its visibility. The building has been used effectively by a number of local business interests in the past years.

A short distance north east of this structure lies the steel-framed skeleton of the mine's engine house, which appears to have been stripped to its girders for its cream colored bricks.

A short distance due east of this ruin lies the remains of the mine's "dry", a building used for the miners to shower and the "dry"-ing of soiled miner's clothes. After the Montreal Mine closed, the "dry", like the Hamilton Club, was renovated by private parties. It became the Montreal Lodge which was remodeled into dormitory rooms, an attractive lobby, dining area and bar. Although miners originally entered the "dry" building directly from the mine via an underground tunnel, the entrance to the tunnel was sealed when the structure became the Montreal Lodge. Like the Hamilton structure, it appears to be just a shell of overgrown vegetation.

Perhaps the most striking architectural feature of the entire District is the residential section of Montreal. Montreal was originally planned as a company mining town in two stages. The first townsite was platted in 1907, which was essentially a grid-pattern with long rectangular blocks. A second townsite was designed by landscape architect Albert Taylor in 1924. Taylor designed the second site with curving streets which complemented and accommodated the surrounding hills. The architectural plans called for the development of an aesthetically pleasing community that would be conducive to keeping miners and their families happy and therefore productive.

The consulting architect evaluated housing options of other established mining communities across the country and balanced these findings against what he considered was the "temperament" of the workers and the families and their adaptability to live in a community housing project. The housing plan called for either single family or multiple units modelled after the community of Ramsey, Michigan. Four basic styles of houses were developed for Montreal's residential area: small bungalows, single house units, double house units and four family house units on large attractively landscaped lots. Green spaces, parks, and even a communal pasture for the family cow where included in the plan.

Part of the charm of Montreal has been the crisp and clean look of its all-white company houses. The Oglebay Norton Improvement Report of 1921, which represented Taylor's recommendations, advised a harmonious paint scheme, which resulted in the houses being painted white. The company's employees had the option of renting, leasing or buying houses, which were all priced very reasonably. In 1927, a landscaping and improvement program was implemented via the company-owned tree nursery and was supervised by one of its employees.

This planning, left an indelible mark on the appearance on the community's landscape. Lawns were kept mowed and residents actively competed with each other to achieve the

nicest and neatest yards. The spirit of community pride seems to have continued. Sidewalks are clean, lawns are carefully manicured and most of its homes are very well kept. With the closing of the Montreal Mine in 1962, over 130 individual houses were sold by the company to former employees, investors and out-of-town vacationers.

The most conspicuous building within the residential section is the Montreal Mining Company office building, constructed in 1913. The building was constructed to resemble a stately mansion to blend with the residential surroundings, yet it actually housed the corporate offices, payroll department, and even the mine's chemistry lab. A huge 3-story safe makes up the core of the structure.

This building was purchased in 1964 and became a bed and breakfast establishment known as "The Iron Gate Inn". Later it was acquired by Dick and Doris Schumacher who continue a bed and breakfast operation under a shorter name "The Inn". Besides being noted as an excellent B&B, "The Inn" also became part of the Montreal Academy, a private alpine ski school for aspiring Olympic racers. It is located at 104 Wisconsin Avenue.

- *Relationship of the Site to the Overall District Theme*

Montreal represents the finest example within the District and perhaps the State of Wisconsin of a pre-planned mining community and the influence that a mining company played in the lives of those who lived within a "company town".

- *Public Safety and Accessibility*

Located on Highway 77, Montreal is easily accessible and highly visible to travellers. Most historic architectural sites are privately owned, but easily viewed from Montreal's network of curving, tree lined streets.

- *Historical Integrity of the Site*

Montreal's historic integrity is, to a large extent, extremely well preserved. This is especially true of its historic company housing. Montreal still presents itself as an excellent example of a mining town. The overall uniformity of the company houses is, for the most part, well preserved. Many company homes still retain their historic white color, although there seems to be an increased incidence of color variation among Montreal's houses which could eventually distract from the community's historic integrity.

Though the former mine's recreation center, engine house and "dry" are in ruins, the excellent state of its machinist shop with its unique fieldstone and mortar walls needs to be viewed to be fully appreciated.

- *Public Interest in Relationship to the Site*

Potential public interest in Montreal is practically pre-established. Montreal, as a historic mining community, has received a great deal of notoriety in the past. The unique, quaintness of its company town character draws visitors who want to know more about its past. It has been featured in numerous historic and popular media articles and it presents itself as the almost perfect model for interpreting a mining "company town" community.

- *Sites Offering Best Opportunities of Revealing Impact of Area Iron Mining*

Montreal Mine Machine Shop-Hamilton Club- Dry Building Complex
Montreal Company Town Housing Styles
Montreal Mining Company Office

PENCE

- *Historical Significance*

Pence could quite possibly be the oldest community on the Gogebic Range. Records indicate that settlers attempted to reside in the area as early as the mid-1840s. In 1840, the family of Henry Pence emigrated from Germany and ultimately settled in the area of the future town site. Thus it is assumed that the community acquired its name from this family.

After the iron mining began in the area, a local mine received the town's name. The "Pence" Mine opened in 1888 and was located on the southeast quarter of Section 32. It was owned by the Northern Chief Iron Company and operated under the direction of Samuel P. Snyder and, coincidentally, Captain Pence of Minneapolis Minnesota. The property was eventually leased to the Republic Steel Corporation with an option to lease entire quarter sections where the mine was located. This option was reviewed annually and carried an expiration date of June 21, 1933. Republic Steel Corporation also considered a similar lease on the Plummer Mine property. Ultimately, the Pence venture revealed itself to be a rather unprofitable mine.

In 1893, the town of Pence was platted and became an unincorporated village. Legal matters concerning the village were still transacted in Ashland until Iron County was created on March 3, 1893. Although it was a distinct community, Pence technically belonged to the village of Montreal until 1917, when it separated and became a municipality. Following its formation, a town board was organized composed of a chairman, supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and assessor. As the town grew, a constable was

elected as well as an overseer of highways and a justice of the peace. Soon a small wooden building was constructed for the transaction of town business. A polling place was also provided and this building was later used as a municipal garage.

Ultimately, the building was purchased by a private owner and was moved to a different location, west of the present Pence Town Hall, on the north side of Highway 77. Pence was the site of one of the first post offices on the Range, where at one time, Montreal residents picked up their mail. In 1940 Pence made arrangements for the construction of a beautiful community center, which contained a gym, council room, library, double garage, kitchen, shower rooms, two rest rooms, furnace room and bar room. Presently this structure can be viewed beside Highway 77 and appears to be in a fine state of preservation.

Pence's first real school building was originally located where the St. Anthony Church stands today on Hibbert Street. Its grades ranged from Kindergarten through the eighth grade. Its heating consisted of a box stove in each of its rooms, with wood as its main source of fuel. Drinking water was hauled into the building in pails and stored in a cooler.

In 1922, a new brick structure was built for Pence's new school at 1022 Spruce Street. This new institution covered the same grade range and after completing the eighth grade, pupils were transported to the Hurley High School to continue their education. In 1958, the school was closed. Today the building serves as the factory for the Netz Glove Company.

Iron mining provided employment for the majority of families in the Pence area. The important mines involved in the history of Pence were the Snyder, Daylite, Pence, and Plummer mines. Logging was a mainstay in Pence's early history. Much of the logging industry revolved around supplying raw materials to the mining industry. Freight and passenger trains made two trips daily into the area and warehouses in Pence provided storage for the Blatz and Heileman Brewing Companies.

Much of Pence's history was directly impacted by fire. On November 11, 1910, the Mozenier Saloon Fire almost destroyed its entire business district. This incident came about through Charles Hyman's over indulgence of spirits in the Mozenier Saloon. Hyman may have carelessly knocked over a lit lamp, yet other sources state that he threw a lit match. With no water available to combat the resulting blaze, five buildings in addition to the Mozenier Saloon burned to the ground. These buildings included Eaver's General Store, Bertagnoli's Tavern, and the Reinerio Building. Eaver's General Store was a large establishment owned by J.C. Eaver and almost anything could be purchased there. Until recently, the remnants of its basement could still be seen.

Fire struck Pence twice in 1910. Its second fire occurred in the fall of that year and destroyed an additional four more buildings.

Pence rebuilt a large part of its main street in brick after the fires. Fires were a constant source of discussion at the meetings of its new town board, thus early on, Pence had its own volunteer fire department.

Eventually, Pence controlled its own sewer and water system. The town was supplied with excellent water from its own artisan wells, which was pumped to storage tanks and then distributed to private homes. In 1931, Pence bought the old Montreal Springs, which brought about the acquisition of a pump station and water tank, leading to the installation of fire hydrants.

Early Pence possessed its own noted baseball team known as the Penokee Stars. It also had its fair share of watering holes, possessing as many as 17 saloons at one time. Present-day Pence retains much of its saloon and business architecture, several buildings, such as the "Calvi Store" building, located at 809 Highway 77, appear to be in an excellent state of preservation.

The most unique architectural attraction of Pence is its fine concentration of indigenous log structures, which vary widely in function, size and style. According to Alan Pape, a recognized expert in Wisconsin log building design, Pence probably has the largest concentration of log structures of any municipality in Wisconsin. The construction of these buildings is also unique. They do not represent the craftsmanship of Finnish log architecture commonly found across the Penokee-Gogebic Range, but according to Pape reflect what he considers an adaptation of that style by the Italian and Corsican immigrants who settled in Pence.

- *Relationship of Site to Overall Theme of District*

Pence, with its unique log structures, provides an interesting contrast in mining community architecture, when compared to its neighbor Montreal. Unlike Montreal, Pence was settled by Italian immigrants who had no mining company to oversee and financially support the development of the community. Needed housing for people, livestock, and equipment were made of indigenous materials-- logs and mortar.

Pence also serves to as an interesting "introduction" to and "counterpart" of the Plummer Headframe located approximately 1.5 miles west of the community just off Highway 77. Pence, together with the Plummer Headframe, present a more complete picture of the everyday life of a mining community and the reality of the industry that helped make it possible.

- *Public Safety and Accessibility*

Pence, as with the other sites of the district is located on Highway 77 and is highly conducive to public visitation. All of its diversity of historic buildings, including its impressive concentration of well-preserved log structures, are located along improved

village streets, providing a visual treat for the roadside viewer.

- *Integrity of the Site*

The integrity of Pence's historic mining architecture, is for the most part, in an excellent state of preservation. This is especially notable in its traditional log structures which are all privately owned and most in excellent repair.

- *Public Interest in the Site*

Potential public interest in Pence can be found in its fine concentration of indigenous log structures. It is also an excellent example of a mining community that evolved from its immigrant roots as opposed to the more formal appearance of Montreal's planned mining "company town" look. The interpretative interaction between Pence as an iron mining community and the Plummer Mine Headframe as the mining location which supported it offers a unique perspective of public interest.

- *Sites Offering the Best Opportunity to Reveal the Impact of Area Iron Mining*

Numerous Indigenous Log Structures within the community
Calvi Store

PLUMMER MINE HEADFRAME

- *Historical Significance*

The Plummer Headframe is located south of Highway 77, between Pence and Iron Belt. According to Associate Professor Tom Evans, Minerals Specialist with the Wisconsin Geologic and Natural History Survey, this structure is the last remaining headframe in the State of Wisconsin.

Work to develop the Plummer Mine began around 1904 under the control of the Oliver Mining Company. In 1912, its first year of production, the Plummer Mine shipped 47,578 tons of ore. Its active years were infrequent, shipping in the years 1912, 1913, 1922, 1923. The Plummer ceased operation in 1924, at which time its workings extended 23 levels with a depth of 2,367 feet. It shipped of 172,329 tons of ore from its stockpiles in 1932, its last year of operation.

Captain Arthur supervised the operation of the Plummer Mine in its early history, his daughter taught school in Iron Belt. The Oliver Mining Company withdrew from their Plummer workings in 1913. In 1917, the Republic Steel Corporation took over the Plummer option, with Charles Peterson in charge of operations. A Mr. Webb of Ironwood was the general manager at this time.

While the Plummer was functioning, it employed approximately 125 men. The mine's product was a low phosphorus, non-bessemer hematite ore, which was sent via the Chicago and Northwestern and Soo Line Railroads to the Ashland docks. Later, the Northern Chief Iron Company acquired the property, represented by Peter DeRubis of Hurley who was also the agent for the Oglebay Norton Mining Company. Some sources state that the Plummer Headframe is 110 feet in height, but there is some question as to the accuracy of this figure.

The headframe was a "giant pulley". The headframe functioned to elevate the sheave wheels to provide the leverage needed to raise and lower miners, equipment, and ore into the mine. Cables stretched from the engine house, located south of the headframe, over the large sheave wheels at the top of the structure. They were connected to elevator-like cars called "cages" that carried miners and to ore cars called "skips" that hauled ore in and out of the mine.

Besides being the last remaining headframe in the State of Wisconsin, the Plummer seems to be of a unique design. Because of its all-metal construction, the structure is, for the most part, still intact and in relatively good condition. Remnants of ore stocks on the site compliment the overall ambience of the headframe and its surroundings. The immediate impression gained at the site is that the headframe and its surroundings are inextricably interwoven.

- *Relationship of the Site to Overall Theme of the District*

The Plummer Headframe works beautifully as a closing statement of the 5-site district, possessing a keen symbolism of the mining heritage of the Range. It is the only structure in the district that directly attributes itself to the mining process. Ultimately this site and its headframe could be perceived as the most poignant and historically illuminating example of mining architecture within the district, if not the Penokee-Gogebic Iron Range.

- *Public Safety and Accessibility*

The Plummer Mine Headframe is located off Highway 77 and Plummer Road and therefore readily accessible to the travelling public. Plummer Road and the short access road are in an accessible condition, but would benefit by grading. Signage will be required to safely direct the visitor from Highway 77 to the site.

The site would benefit from the addition of graded walkways to the Headframe. The Headframe should be fenced to protect its historic integrity and provide greater security for visitors.

The site is only a short distance from the highway and the viewing of its headframe from Highway 77 would be possible by "brushing out" a line of sight from the Highway to the Headframe.

These concerns are presently being addressed by a coalition of groups interested in preserving the site, including the Town of Pence which owns the site and fully supports its development as an interpretative site.

- *Integrity of the Site*

The Plummer Mine Headframe is still intact and in relatively good shape, though parts of the structure are concealed by trees and brush. The structure appears to be very stable. Remnants of ore stocks in the immediate area tend to compliment the overall ambience of the headframe and its surroundings.

- *Public Interest in the Site*

The Plummer Mine Headframe is the last remaining mining headframe in the State of Wisconsin. Local public interest is increasing to develop this site as a heritage interpretive park and to have the site nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The unusual sight of a large Headframe towering over the treetops, in itself creates interest in visitors who now stop to wonder about its function. The Plummer Mine Headframe is more directly linked to the physical reality of iron mining than any other structure in the District and for that reason may be the most historically significant architectural feature of the district.

- *Sites Offering the Best Opportunities to Reveal the Impact of Area Iron Mining*

Plummer Mine Headframe and surrounding tailings stock piles

Site Worksheets

IRON COUNTY MINING DISTRICT REPORT
SITE DATA WORKSHEET

Site Name

Present: **CITY OF HURLEY-HISTORIC DISTRICT** Past: Town of Vaughn

Site Location

Street Address: Takes in several blocks of downtown area, including Iron County Historical Museum.

City: Hurley Township:

Site Description

Site Type, Context of Theme: Historic District.
Example of the iron mining area central commerce center.

Construction Date or Era: The village site platted in 1884, by Northern Chief Mining Company.

Setting: City

Physical Description: Community with many interesting buildings, some built in 1880-1890s. Some downtown revitalization work was done in the 1980s.

Historical Significance

Village platted in 1884 by North Chief Mining Company. Named for Michael Angelo Hurley, prominent Wausau attorney who won a law suit for the mining company and this was his compensation.
First building erected - Small shanty on October 15, 1884 by H. Surprise. Hurley grew into business hub for the area.
Burton House - Built for $100,000 in 1886. It burned in 1947. John E. Burton invested heavily in Hurley's business district.
Richard's Block - constructed in late 1880s, on the corner of 2nd Ave. and Silver Street is one of oldest remaining buildings in Hurley. In the 1890s Brill & Langdon Dry Goods moved into building. It later became I. Brill's Son Dry Goods, when Langdon left the Business. Also in building at this time was McConnell Hardware, photo studios, legal offices and other professional offices. The original architecture is well preserved.
Flat Iron Building (also known as "Bon Ton") - Constructed in late 1880s. Located at 5th Ave. & Silver St. Unique shape of building due to fitting it to the lot it is on, with railroad lines restricting it. Owned by a Mr. Carpenter, it was destroyed in Hurley's big fire on July 9, 1887. Flat Iron probably refers to the engineering / architecture of building, while "Bon Ton" refers to the similarity in appearance when rebuilt shortly after the fire. Original use of building was to process immigrants arriving in Hurley by train. In 1895 Constantine and Florian Erspamer purchased building. Damaged in the Klondike Theatre fire on November 24, 1901, and repaired. The 1912 addition was built for Andy Erspamer and used as barber shop. Building also known as the "Point" at this time. Building housed saloon, barbershop, bus station and other things. "Basswood Joe" Rostollan and Al Westlund also ran barbershops in the building. Saloon was run by Constantine Erspamer. In recent years, the building was owned by Albert Constantini and sold to Earl Gingery. Renovated in 1976 by Gingery into a restaurant, eliminating the barber shop. Presently is Sneakers Bar & Grill.

Historical Significance (Continued)
Iron County Historical Museum - Completed construction in 1893 as Vaughn Town Hall. Cost of building was $32,917.04: Site $3503.55, Building Contract $16,200, Extras $13,213.49. Iron County was formed in 1893 from parts of Ashland and Vilas counties. The Town of Vaughn included Hurley. The 2 other townships in the county were Dogwood, and Knight. The Town of Vaughn lost its name when Hurley became a city in 1919. Renovation eliminated the large front doorway with ramp that was used by fire wagons. The structure once housed the county jail and residence for jail tender. The Iron County Historical Society took over the building on November 24, 1976 to use as a museum when the county government moved to a new court house. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in July, 1977. **First Presbyterian Church:** Constructed in 1886. Built as a wood structure, limestone exterior was added later. **St. Mary's Catholic Church:** Constructed in 1906. Brownstone structure. **J.E. Murphy High School:** Constructed in 1915. Vacant. New high school opened in 1991. **Iron County Memorial Building:** Stucco was applied to the outside in the late 1980s. **Germania Mine:** Ore discovered in 1882. Hayes Brothers began mine operations in 1885. First train load of ore shipped on July 13, 1885, to Ashland's newly built ore docks, was the first load to go out of Ashland. Underground fire in March of 1890, took 5 miner's lives. Closed in 1912. 470,269 tons of ore shipped. **Mahogany Ridge Bar:** Example of saloon heritage. Beautiful back bar and other interesting architectural features indicating the use as a brothel and front for gambling & drinking during prohibition.
Site in Relation to the District Theme
Important railroad terminus for Gogebic Range to Ashland ore docks. Chief commerce center. Had stock exchange for mining ventures. Mining site of Germania. Doorway to the District.
Public Safety and Accessibility to Site Visitation
Sites are easily accessible and safe for public viewing as many buildings are public at this time.
Site Integrity
The Hurley Historic District has documented historical significance to the area as the hub of commerce for the mining locations and mining investment speculations. Many fine historic architectural examples exist.
Potential Public Interest in Site
The public has been fascinated with Hurley's colorful history for many years. Historic walking tours have been offered and have been very successful. Hurley today offers several special events, introducing the public to the district.
Site Selection Offering Best Opportunity for Demonstrating the Impact of Area Mining to the Public
Hurley could be the front door to the Mining District due to its notoriety and importance as a commerce center, as well as site of mining operations. Properties of special interest are Richard's Block, Flat Iron, Site of Burton House, Iron County Historical Museum, First Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's Church, Germania Mine Site and the "Lower Block" on Silver Street (includes Mahogany Ridge Bar).

Recommendation for Development and Preservation for Site Integrity and Safety

Recommend interpretive sign on Hurley Historic District at corner of 5th Ave. and Silver Street, across the street from the Flat Iron Building. Allows for traffic to pull off of the road for viewing, and access by snowmobile and mountain biking enthusiasts.

Recommendation for Interpretation of the Site

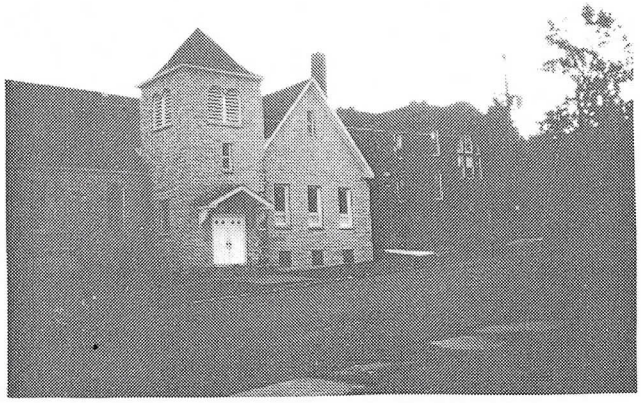
Tell the story of Hurley development including the beginning of town, mining commerce center, fires and buildings. Through brochure include a walking tour of historic buildings with interpretive stories on them.

Bibliography

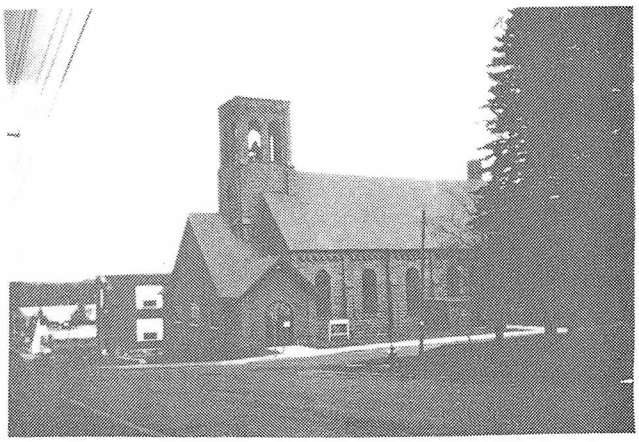
Files of Iron County Historical Society.
Rooted in Resources - Iron County Centennial Book, Catherine Techtmann, 1993.
Private File Collection of Otto Erspamer.

Photographs / Graphics

First Presbyterian Church, 1886. (4th Ave. S.)



St. Mary's Catholic Church, 1906. (S. 5th Ave.)



Photographs / Graphics (Continued)

Iron County Historical Museum, 1893. (Iron County Court House, 303 Iron St.)



Flat Iron / Bon Ton, Late 1880s. (Corner of 5th Ave. & Silver St.)

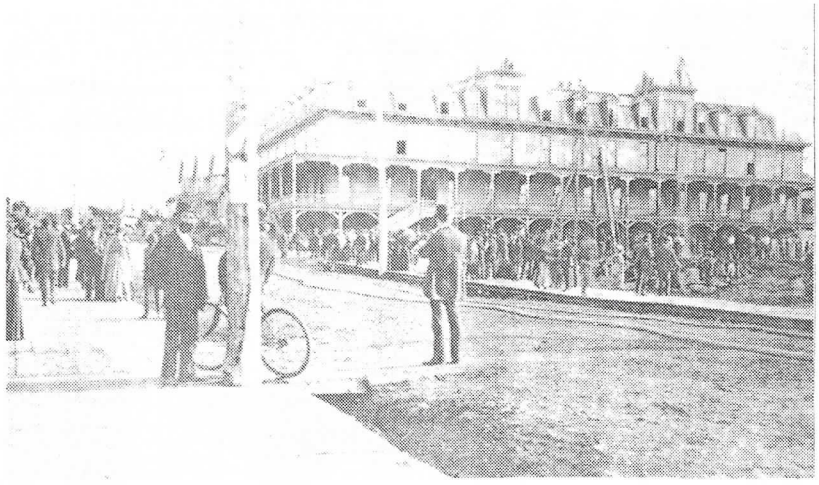


Richard's Block, Late 1880s (122 Silver St.)

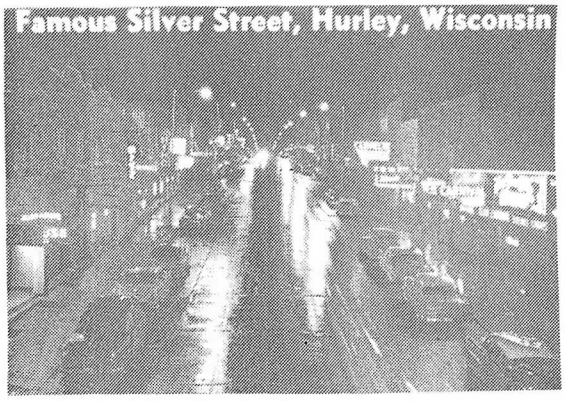


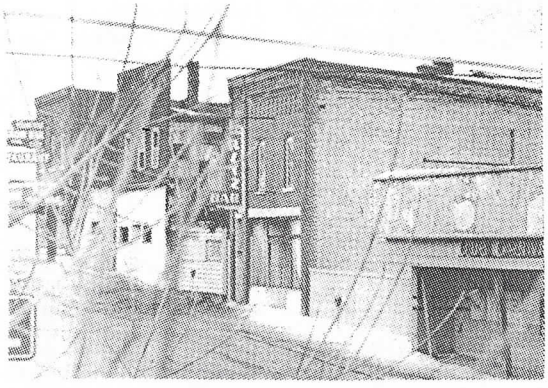
Photographs / Graphics (Continued)

Burton House, 1886. (5th Ave. South, Near Silver St.)



Lower Block, Tavern District. (Eastern Block of Silver St.)





IRON COUNTY MINING DISTRICT REPORT
SITE DATA WORKSHEET

Site Name

Present: **GILE** Past:

Site Location

Street Address: Community
City: Montreal Township:

Site Description

Site Type, Context of Theme: Site of lumbering operation which supplied mine with timber. Part of the City of Montreal. Good viewing of Tailing piles from Montreal Mine.

Construction Date or Era: 1880s

Setting: Community on West Branch of Montreal River

Physical Description: Beautiful community, west of Hurley, on Gile Flowage and Montreal River with falls located in town, easily accessible with great view of tailing piles.

Historical Significance

Fifield Mill: Began in the early 1880s.
Henry Meade: Logged 1886-1898. Supplied timber for Montreal Mine. Depleted timber supply in mining district.
Montreal: Montreal formed in 1900, which incorporated Gile in its boundaries.
Gordon H Gile: Noted timber cruiser from Wausau, for which community is named.
1890: By this time Gile had school, church, mill store, saloons, dance hall, sleeping shanties and boarding houses.
Montreal River Lumber Company: Most sources- Dave McCrossen started and ran company beginning in 1885. Operations reached from Pine Lake Area to Montreal, with logs floated up river to Gile. Mill was later owned by B. Norman and burned in 1907. Other Sources - Mike McCrossen began mill in 1897-1905, when it was dismantled and moved to Wausau. Discrepancies exist. By 1904, virgin pine had been cut over. Many lumberjacks moved out of area. Some stayed & provided timber for mines, others became miners.
1909: B. Norman moved mill from Upson to Montreal. Mill was small and closed in 1915 when destroyed by fire. Shortly after, Gile's history became closely linked to mining.
1941: Lake Superior District Power Company built dam on West Branch of Montreal River creating the Gile Flowage.
Tailing Piles: Tailing Piles from the Montreal Mine can be clearly seen from the Gile Falls overlook. They tower over the river, creating a spectacular view.
GIFA Center: Built in 1926. Acted as Gile's Coolidge School. Purchased in 1960's and renovated for meeting hall & social center. Acquired by Gile Flowage Association and named GIFA Center.

Site in Relation to the District Theme

Supplied timber for mines. Several mining sites lie in the community.

Public Safety and Accessibility to Site Visitation

Strategically located along Hwy. 77 corridor. Easily accessible by many modes. Open to public visitation at present.

Site Integrity
Structures on main street remaining (GIFA Center). Tailing Piles from Mine indicate size of mining operation. Best viewing opportunity for tailing piles.
Potential Public Interest in Site
The attractive setting on the river with waterfalls will be very appealing. The magnitude of tailings give understanding to the amount of ore extracted and size of mining operation.
Site Selection Offering Best Opportunity for Demonstrating the Impact of Area Mining to the Public
Montreal Mine Ore Tailing Stock Piles as viewed from Gile Falls Overlook.
Recommendation for Development and Preservation for Site Integrity and Safety
Placement of interpretive sign at Gile Falls Overlook. Inclusion in self-guided mining district tour brochure.
Recommendation for Interpretation of the Site
Tell the story of the Tailing piles from the Montreal Mines. Indicate the logging connection to supplying timber for mines, as the beginning of the community.
Bibliography
Files of Iron County Historical Society. *Rooted in Resources* - Iron County Centennial Book, Catherine Techtmann, 1993. Private File Collection of Otto Erspamer.
Photographs / Graphics
GIFA Center, 1926. (Coolidge School, 14 Nimikon Street)

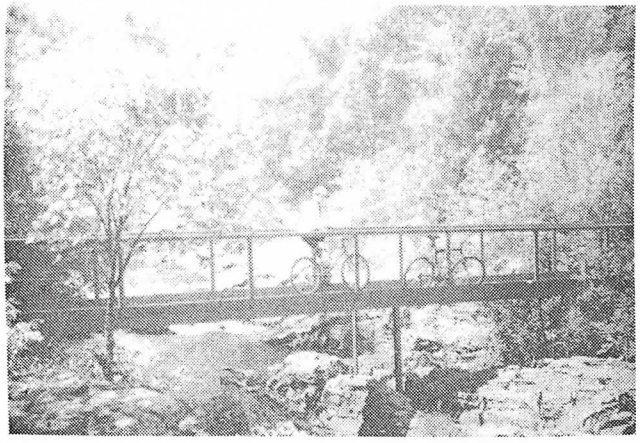


Photographs / Graphics (Continued)

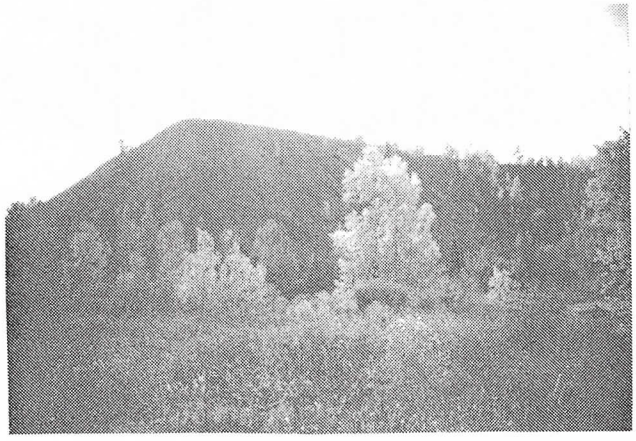
Downtown Gile. (No known historic name, 11 Nimikon Street)



Gile Falls Overlook, with Tailing Piles.



Tailing Piles.



IRON COUNTY MINING DISTRICT REPORT
SITE DATA WORKSHEET

Site Name

Present: **MONTREAL** Past:

Site Location

Street Address: Community
City: Montreal Township:

Site Description

Site Type, Context of Theme: Planned Company Mining Town. A National Register of Historic Places Historic District

Construction Date or Era: 1884 (Company housing dates from 1907-1930)

Setting: Community

Physical Description: A planned company town with mining company building remnants and company houses that still exist today, many of them in the original design and white color. Very attractive community.

Historical Significance

Present day City of Montreal combines the communities of Montreal and Gile.
1884: Mining Industry began in Montreal after 6 years of exploration.
Montreal Mining Company: Division of Oglebay, Norton, and Co. Acquired 6 small explorations & developed them (Moore, Section 33, Trimble, Jupiter, Bourne, Ottawa). By 1886, 57,507 tons of ore had been shipped through Ashland. To mine greater depths, older shafts were replaced by modern deeper shafts. No. 5 Auxiliary Shaft was 4,337 feet below the surface, reputedly making the mine the deepest iron ore mine in the world. A headframe of 164 feet was required to remove the ore. Annual output of the mine exceeded 1,000,000 tons & the mine employed an average of 700 persons. Ore was shipped regularly from 1886 until August 10, 1962, when the operation ended. The last ore shipment was from one of the stockpiles in 1963.
Schools: First school classes held in 1888 in boarding house. From 1892-1894, children were sent to school in Pence. In 1894, a one-room school was constructed in Montreal on the hill summit, near the Calvi Store. Sarah Nicholson was the first principal, followed by Charles Lennon, John Kirby and Henry Walsh. In 1907, George Sullivan arrived as principal and the school was 4 rooms. In 1915 a new brick school was built in the "Old Location" of Montreal. In 1926 the Roosevelt School was built and opened on November 26. Due to a disagreement on where the new school should be located, Gile also constructed a new school in 1926 (GIFA Center). The Montreal school is located at base of Bourne Hill. George Sullivan, Sr. remained as principal until 1956, when Anton Calvi took over. Children were educated through 8th grade at this school, then transferred to Hurley for High School. The Roosevelt School is still standing and is used by a clothing manufacturer, Art Unlimited.
March 2, 1900: City of Montreal created by Iron County Board of Supervisors. R. E. Roberts was first town chairman. Town meetings were held in the jail building.
February 20, 1917: Town of Montreal was incorporated as Village of Hamilton.
1924: Electorate changed village to a fourth class city - Montreal.
First Montreal City Hall: Built in 1925. Contained Fire Station and Jail. Remodeled after mine closed in 1962 by private parties who purchased it, it now has two unique apartments. A window replaced the fire station garage door. The building's jail cells became bathrooms, with bars on the windows. Presently a recreation home and well maintained.

Historical Significance (Continued)

2nd City Hall: Built in 1940, by the Olgebay Norton Mining Company as a company Clinic. It was deeded to the city following the closing of the mine. Today it still houses the city offices and the library.

Hamilton Club: Construction started in 1918, opened to public on July 5, 1919, as a recreation club for the Olgebay Norton miners and their families. Cost of construction was $65,023.22, paid for by Olgebay Norton Company of Cleveland, who owned the Montreal Mining company. 50' X 100' Building sat in beautiful setting surrounded by trees and a lovely lawn.The Club was the hub of community activity, holiday parties and masked balls. The basement of the structure is made of stone and brick and contained a recreation room with pool tables, bowling alleys, smoking room, barber shop, soda fountain, and kitchen, with terrazzo floors. A main lobby had 2 entrances to a auditorium, with stage & dressing rooms. In early years the Club hosted minstrel shows with local talent. Later movies were shown on weekends for a dime. Off the main lobby was a large office, intended to be used as a library. The library was moved upstairs, where the ladies restroom and lounge were. The lounging parlor was furnished with comfortable chairs, long mirrors and large stone fireplace. Roosevelt School programs also used the auditorium. When the mine closed, the Club was donated to the First Presbyterian Church in Hurley, which sold it to John Galioto of Merrill, WI. He turned it into a ski lodge named "Mountain Shadows", renamed "Hamilton Lodge". On July 27, 1968 a fire was discovered in a washroom in the early morning, and it destroyed most of the inside of the building. The cause of the fire was not determined. Some efforts have been made to salvage and use the first floor, but it has been neglected for many years.

Montreal Mine Machine Shop: Built in 1918-1919. Large rectangular building, housed mining equipment and tools. Building is still standing and in good condition. Building is now used to manufacture wreaths.

Mine Engine House: Built in 1918-1919. Now only a steel-framed skeleton remains of what was a large brick structure.

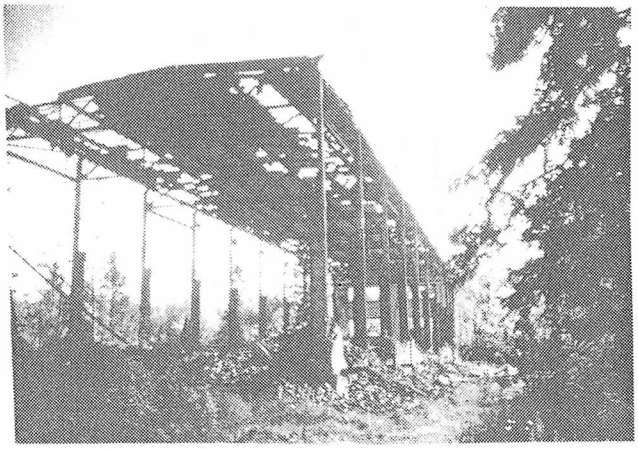
Montreal Dry: Built in 1918-1919. Building used by the miners to shower and "dry" soiled miner's clothes. After mine closed the "Dry" was renovated by private parties into a ski lodge called the Montreal Lodge. It had dormitory rooms, an attractive lobby (the miner's time clock room), dining area and bar (former locker rooms). Miner's entered the structure through an underground tunnel. This was sealed when renovated to lodge. Now building is an empty shell.

Residential Montreal: Planned company town in 2 stages. First town site platted in 1907, as a grid pattern with long rectangular blocks. Second town site designed by landscape architect, Albert Taylor, in 1924. Second plat had curved streets to complement the hills. Plans called for an aesthetic pleasing community, conducive to keeping miners and their families happy and productive. The architect looked at housing designs in other mining communities and considered the temperament of the workers and families. Having looked at Ramsay, Michigan, 4 basic styles of houses were developed: small bungalows, single unit houses, double unit houses and four family units, all to be placed on large attractively landscaped lots. The houses were all white, due to the Olgebay Norton Improvement Report of 1921 advising a harmonious paint scheme. Company employees could rent, lease or buy the houses. In 1927, a landscaping and improvement program was implemented by the mining company, which resulted in well manicured yards and a spirit of community pride. This has continued as the community is very quaint today. When the mine closed in 1962, the mining company sold over 130 houses to employees, investors and vacationers.

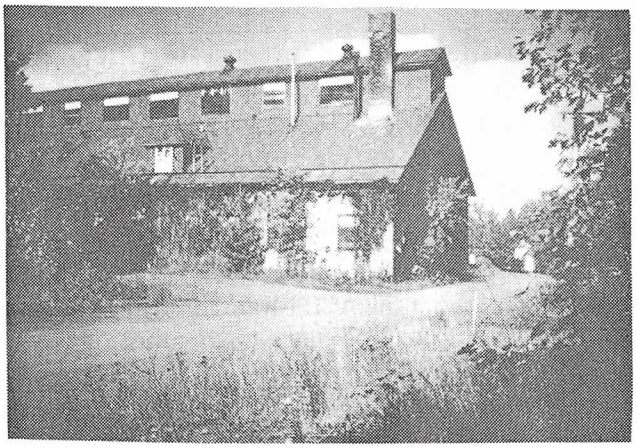
Historical Significance (Continued)
Montreal Mining Company Office: Built in 1913. Built to resemble a stately home. Housed corporate offices, payroll department, and chemistry lab. A 3 story safe runs through the core of the building. Purchased in 1964, it became a bed and breakfast establishment called the " Iron Gate Inn". Later purchased by Dick and Doris Schumacher, it was run as Montreal Academy for alpine skiers. They now operate it as "The Inn" Bed & Breakfast.
Site in Relation to the District Theme
Planned company mining community. Site of Montreal Mine, reputedly the world's deepest iron ore mine.
Public Safety and Accessibility to Site Visitation
Easily accessible as the community lies along Hwy. 77. Also accessible by several modes of transportation, including biking, hiking, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. Mine shafts have been capped and sites are safe for the public.
Site Integrity
Extremely well preserved example of a company mining town. Many buildings remain as there were, giving the visitor a feel of what the community looked like during the days when the mine operated.
Potential Public Interest in Site
The public is fascinated by the quaint appearance of Montreal, as opposed to what one might imagine a company town to look like. Visitors are intrigued and want to know more.
Site Selection Offering Best Opportunity for Demonstrating the Impact of Area Mining to the Public
A part of the City of Montreal is on the National Register of Historic Places making it a prime site for interpretation. Of special interest: Montreal Mine Machine Shop/Hamilton Club/Dry Building Complex, Montreal Company Town Housing Styles, Montreal Mining Company Office.
Recommendation for Development and Preservation for Site Integrity and Safety
Recommend erecting an interpretive sign kiosk, using separate panels to tell different aspects of the community's past. Recommend a City Preservation Ordinance to help preserve the unique appearance (all white houses). A geological marker is present now.
Recommendation for Interpretation of the Site
Tell the stories of the Mine Operations, the Community Planning and the Community Social Life.
Bibliography
Files of Iron County Historical Society. *Rooted in Resources* - Iron County Centennial Book, Catherine Techtmann, 1993. Private File Collection of Otto Erspamer.

Photographs or Graphics

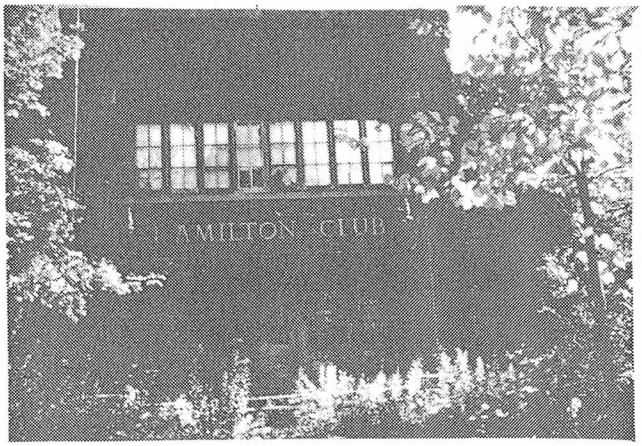
Montreal Mine Engine House, 1918-1919. (Hwy. 77, Wisconsin Ave.)



Montreal Mine Machinery Shop, 1918-1919. (Hwy. 77, Wisconsin Ave.)

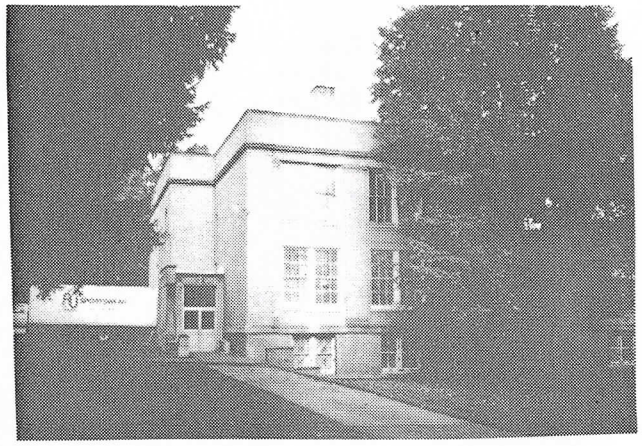


Hamilton Club, 1918. (Hwy. 77, Wisconsin Ave.)



Photographs or Graphics (Continued)

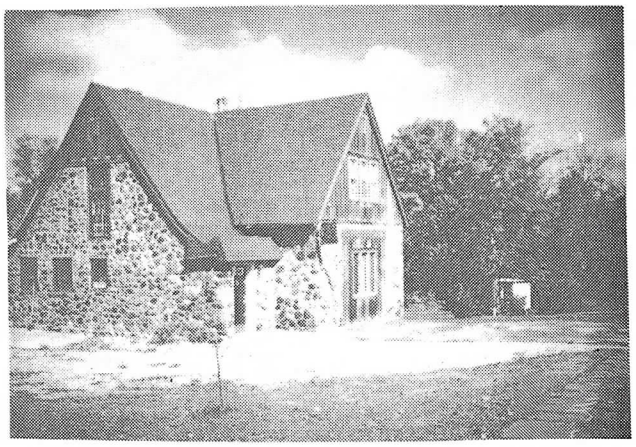
Roosevelt School, 1926. (East End of Michigan Ave.)



Montreal City Hall, 1940. (Montreal Mining Company Clinic, 53 Wisconsin Ave.)

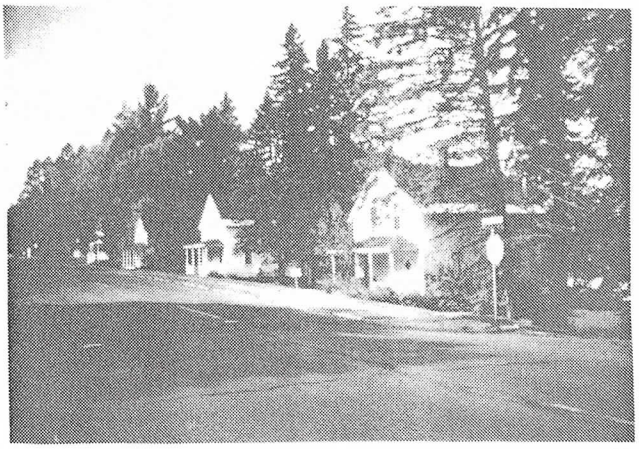


First Montreal City Hall, 1925. (82 Wisconsin Ave.)



Photographs or Graphics (Continued)

Montreal Residential, 1920s.



Montreal Mining Company Office (The Inn), 1913. (104 Wisconsin Ave.)



IRON COUNTY MINING DISTRICT REPORT
SITE DATA WORKSHEET

Site Name

Present: **PENCE** Past:

Site Location

Street Address: Community
City: Township: Pence

Site Description

Site Type, Context of Theme: Example of mining community which was not planned. Unique log architecture specific to this community and ethnic origin of settlers.

Construction Date or Era: 1840

Setting: Community

Physical Description: A small mining community that was not planned, such as Montreal was. It has a large concentration of log structures, which still exist.

Historical Significance

Possibly the oldest community on the Gogebic Range.
1840: The Henry Pence family emigrated from Germany and settled in future site of town.
1888: Pence mine opened. Located on SE 1/4 of Section 32. Owned by the Northern Chief Iron Company. Operated by Samuel P. Snyder & Captain Pence of Minneapolis, MN. Property later leased by Republic Steel Corporation with option on entire quarter sections. The option was reviewed annually expiring June 21, 1933. The Republic Steel Corporation looked at leasing the Plummer Mine, also.
1893: Town platted. Legal matters conducted in Ashland until Iron County broke off on March 3, 1893.
1917: Separated from Village of Montreal. Town board was comprised of chairman, supervisor, clerk treasurer and assessor. A Constable, overseer of highways and justice of the peace were added as town grew. A small wooden town hall was erected. Building was later used as town garage. Building was purchased by private owner & moved. Pence had one of first post offices on the Range.
Community Center: Built in 1940. Contained gym, council room, library, double garage, kitchen, shower rooms, 2 restrooms, furnace room and bar. Building still used as community center today. Located on Hwy. 77 in Pence.
School: First school building located where St. Ambrose Church stands today. Held classes for K-8th grade. Heating was a box stove in each room, using wood. Drinking water was hauled in with pails. In 1922 new brick school was built. School covered same grades and students attended Hurley High School for the higher grades. Closed in 1958. Netz Glove manufacturer now resides in the building.
Economy: Mines provided major employment. Mines included: Snyder, Daylite, Pence and Plummer. Logging also provided employment, and supported the mining industry by supplying timbers. 2 trips daily through area were made by freight and passenger trains. Warehouses provided storage for Blatz & Heileman Brewing companies.

Historical Significance (Continued)
Fires: On November 11, 1910, the Mozenier Saloon Fire destroyed most of business district. Charles Hyman had too much to drink and probably knocked over a lit lamp. Some sources state he threw a match. No water was available and the Mozenier Saloon, Eaver's General Store, Bertagnoli's Tavern and the Reinerio Buildings burned. Eaver's General Store was large building owned by J.C. Eaver, and sold most everything. The second fire of 1910 destroyed an additional 4 buildings. Much of the Main Street was rebuilt in brick. Fires prompted Pence to have its own volunteer fire department. Steam pumpers were filled with water from town reservoirs and provided pressure for fighting fires. **Water:** Pence had its own sewer and water system. Artisan Wells provided the water. In 1931, Pence bought the Montreal Springs, with pump station and water tank, leading to the installation of fire hydrants. **Social:** Pence had its own baseball team, the Penokee Stars. Pence also had 17 saloons. Pence still reveals the saloon and business architecture, such as the Calvi Store. **Log Structures:** Approximately 20 log structures exist today in Pence, possibly the highest concentration in a community of its size in Wisconsin. Construction of the buildings is unique, as they are not Finnish log structures, which are normally found in the area. They appear to be an adaptation of that style by the Italian and Corsican immigrants who settled Pence.
Site in Relation to the District Theme
Provides an interesting contrast in mining community formation when compared to Montreal. Settled by Italian immigrants, there was no company financially supporting the community's development. Needed housing was made with what was available; logs & mortar. Pence also complements the Plummer Mine Site, which lies just to the west.
Public Safety and Accessibility to Site Visitation
Visible on Hwy. 77, Pence is easily accessible. No safety hazards are evident.
Site Integrity
Site has been inspected by a historical building consultant, and recommended for development of a mini-ethnic interpretive museum, using the log buildings. Indicated as a good candidate for the National Register of Historic Places.
Potential Public Interest in Site
The contrast in communities (Montreal and Pence) will generate natural curiosity as to how this evolved. Interest as to the location of the town, in respect to the Plummer Mine location will also be natural. Interest already has been expressed in the log structures.
Site Selection Offering Best Opportunity for Demonstrating the Impact of Area Mining to the Public
As a non-planned mining community, Pence presents a good opportunity for this interpretation. Of particular interest are the indigenous log structures and Calvi's Store.
Recommendation for Development and Preservation for Site Integrity and Safety
See Attached Report by Alan Pape.
Recommendation for Interpretation of the Site
See Attached Report by Alan Pape.

Bibliography

Files of Iron County Historical Society.
Rooted in Resources - Iron County Centennial Book, Catherine Techtmann, 1993.
Private File Collection of Otto Erspamer.
Report by Alan Pape, Historic Building Consultant, 1994.

Photographs / Graphics

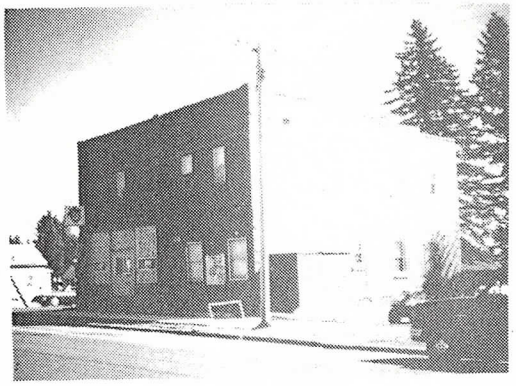
Log Structures. (Throughout village of Pence)

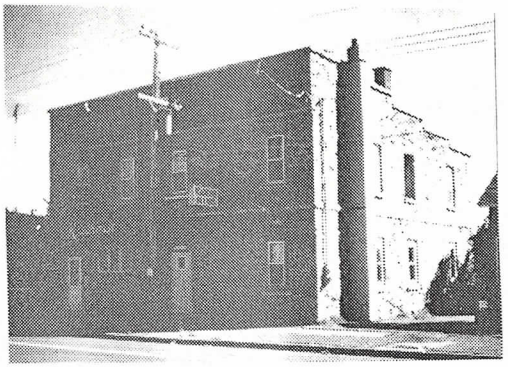




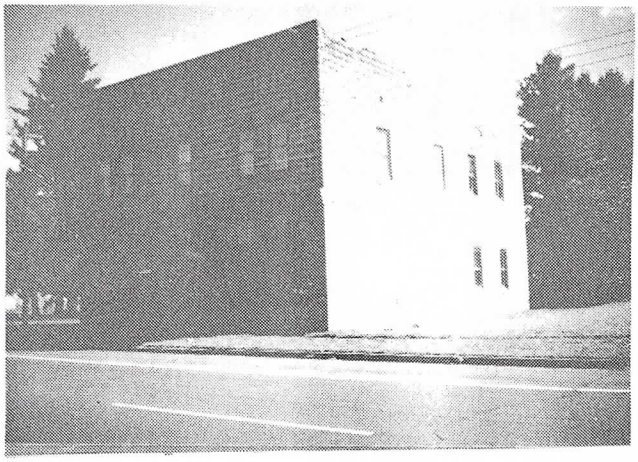
Photographs / Graphics (Continued)

Downtown Pence Business District. (No known historic name, Hwy. 77)

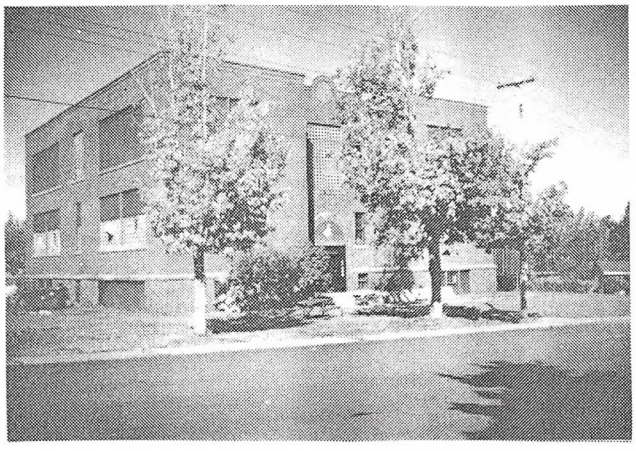




Calvi Store. (Hwy. 77)



Pence School (Netz Glove), 1922. (1022 Spruce Ave.)



ALAN C. PAPE CONSULTING
Box 31 • Greenbush, Wisconsin 53026 • (414) 526-3433

DATE: June 17, 1994

TO: Iron County Tourism Planners

FROM: Alan C. Pape, Historic Building Consultant Alan C. Pape

SUBJECT: Potential Log Restoration/Tourism Site; Pence, Wisconsin

On May 12, 1994 an investigative visit was made to the village of Pence, iron County, Wisconsin. It was noted by myself and others that Pence contains quite a collection of log buildings compared to other villages of its size in Wisconsin. One has to travel to the gold and lead mining towns of the Rocky Mountains to see as many log structures in an urban setting. There are approximately 20 log structures, mostly barns and garages, still standing in this almost 100% Catholic Italian, former mining town.

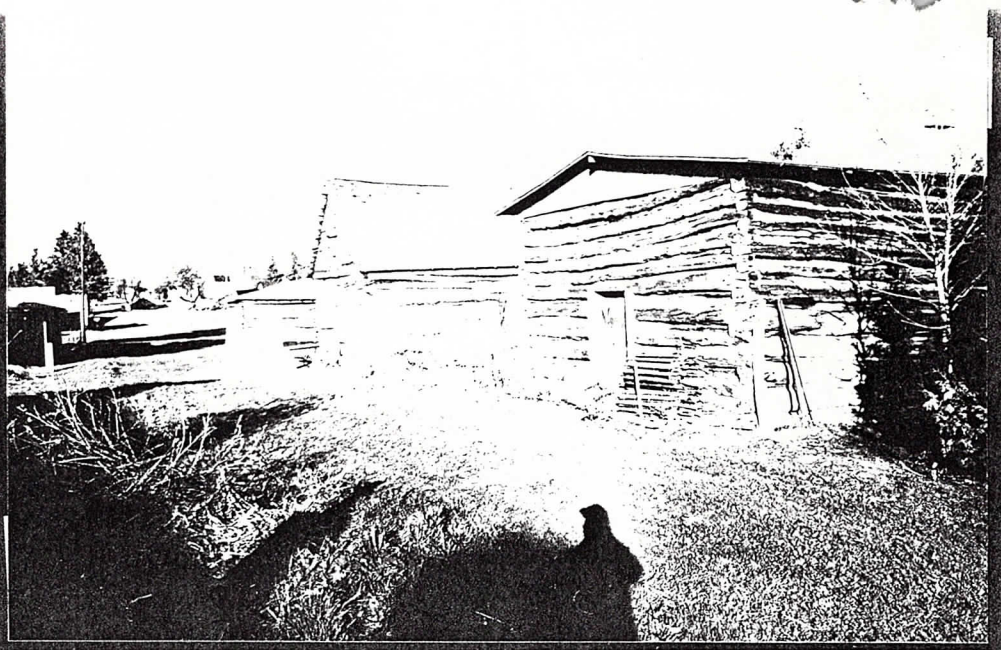
Since 1973, when I first photographed Pence, the village has lost several historic buildings including a major commercial block as well as its rough mining town look. The village has new asphalt streets and several new houses and mobile homes.

A heritage project in Pence would provide a historically important story of Wisconsin history, not offered anywhere else; an Italian miner's home and outbuildings built in the "American way" using log construction. A variety of log styles and handiwork are present in the village, including vertical log outbuildings.

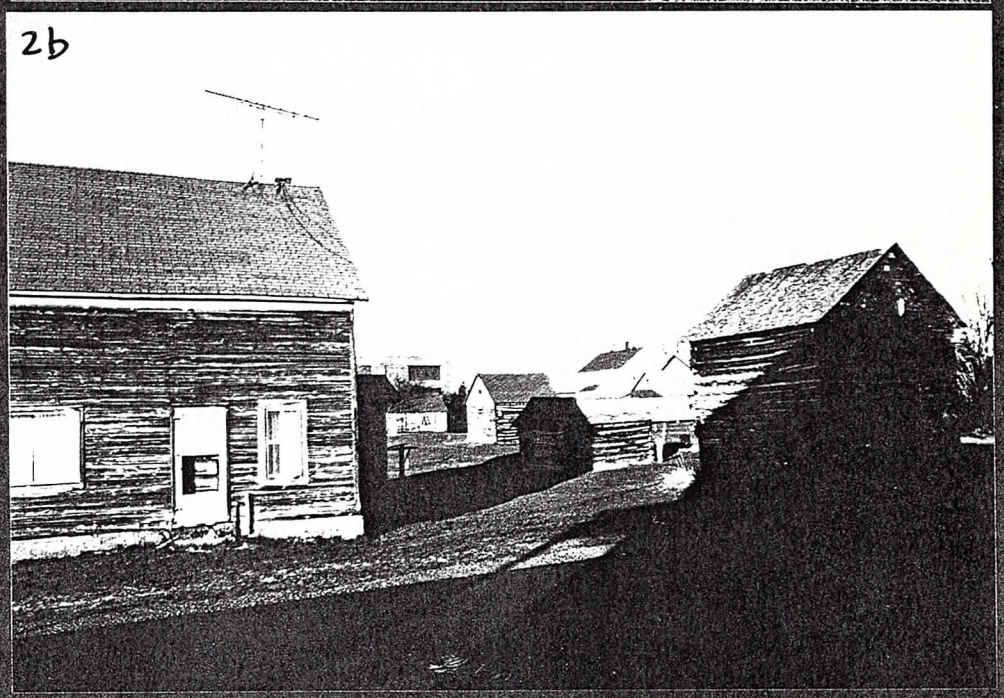
There could be assembled enough physical and historical resources to produce a high quality heritage tourism destination. Using a complete village lot, house, barn, and landscape, a point-in-time ethnic mini museum could be created and interpreted for visitors in the area. There is at least one log house and barn possibly available on a west end village lot. (see photo #2b) A local Italian historical group could be formed to purchase, restore, interpret and promote the site as well as join in other Iron County tourism activities. Groups like this are easy to form and are the best caretakers of an area's historic resources, given the right encouragement and direction. The Italian theme is not offered anywhere else in Wisconsin and the project could add needed interest and a bit of Old World charm to the Pence streetscape. Perhaps the project could spin off other tourism-related businesses that could use the vacant main street buildings and enlarge on the Italian theme.

I am available to help create such a group and project, as well as giving assistance to the research, restoration and interpretation of an Italian heritage site.

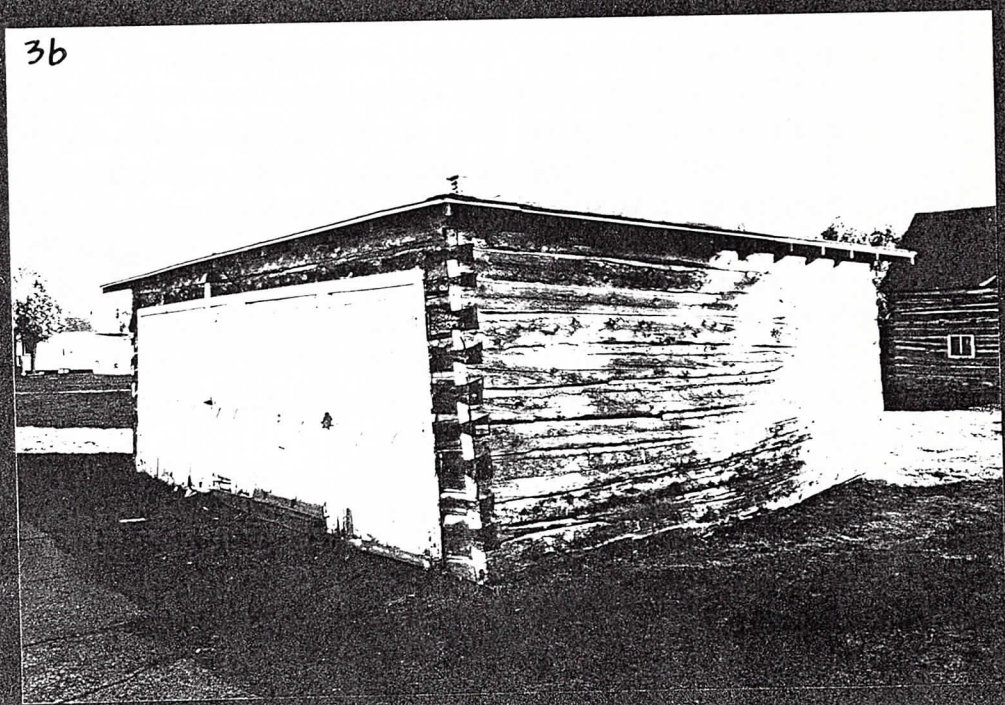
The village is also a good candidate for the National Register of Historic Places. Through the nomination process, much of the historical information needed to interpret an Italian mini-living history project would be collected.



2b



3b



Photographs / Graphics (Continued)

Pence Community Center, 1940. (Hwy. 77)



IRON COUNTY MINING DISTRICT REPORT
SITE DATA WORKSHEET

Site Name

Present: **PLUMMER MINE HEADFRAME** Past:

Site Location

Street Address: Plummer Mine Rd.
City: Township: Pence

Site Description

Site Type, Context of Theme: Mine Site and location of last remaining headframe in the state.

Construction Date or Era: 1904

Setting: On Plummer Rd., just south of Hwy. 77, between communities of Pence and Iron Belt.

Physical Description: Wooded Area, with tailing piles and mine headframe.

Historical Significance

Development started in 1904, by Oliver Mining Company. Mine shipped ore intermittently from 1912-1932. In 1912 mine shipped 47,578 tons of ore. Active shipping years were: 1912, 1913, 1922, 1923, and 1932, for a total of 172,329 tons. Captain Arthur supervised mine early on. His daughter taught school in Iron Belt. Oliver Mining Company withdrew in 1913. In 1917 Republic Steel took over, with Charles Peterson in charge of operations. Mr. Webb from Ironwood was general manger. The mine ceased operation in 1924. Mine had 23 levels with depth of 2,367 feet. Last shipment was in 1932. Mine employed approximately 125 men. Ore was a low-phosphorus, non-bessemer hematite. Ore shipped on Chicago and Northwestern and Soo Line Railroad to Ashland ore docks. North Chief Iron Company acquired the property, represented by Peter DeRubis of Hurley, also the agent for Olgebay Norton. According to some sources the height of the headframe is 110 feet. Some question this. Structure of headframe remains and is the last standing headframe in the state. Structure is metal and appears to be stable. Tailing piles are located at the site.

Site in Relation to the District Theme

Works as closing statement for five site district. It is only mine headframe remaining in district (as well as state). Lends understanding to the mining process.

Public Safety and Accessibility to Site Visitation

Site is easily accessible from Hwy. 77 on Plummer Road. Although it has access at present, the Town of Pence will be upgrading the access to be more visitor friendly. Site will need to have the headframe secured to eliminate climbing on the structure. Directional signage from Hwy. 77 is appropriate. Site should be brushed out, so it is visible from highway. Additional funding sources have been secured for these improvements.

Site Integrity

Headframe is still intake and in good shape. Potential candidate for the national Historic Register. Is authentic site of mine operations and authentic structure.

Potential Public Interest in Site

Public interest is increasing to develop this site as an interpretive park. Out of area interest has also been expressed. The headframe is physical evidence that lends understanding to the mining industry.

Site Selection Offering Best Opportunity for Demonstrating the Impact of Area Mining to the Public

The Plummer Mine Headframe location is perfectly suited to the development of an interpretive park.

Recommendation for Development and Preservation for Site Integrity and Safety

Recommend erecting an interpretive sign kiosk, fencing in the Headframe for safety and preservation, and upgrading access and visibility. Placement of picnic tables would make this an ideal park for travelers.

Recommendation for Interpretation of the Site

Tell the story of the Plummer location and mining operations. Include relationship to Pence and information on the settlement of Plummer.

Bibliography

Files of Iron County Historical Society.
Rooted in Resources - Iron County Centennial Book, Catherine Techtmann, 1993.
Private File Collection of Otto Erspamer.

Photographs or Graphics





IV. District Perspective

- Relationship of Sites to the Overall District Theme

Based on the findings of this draft report, that all of the five sites selected for investigation within Iron County's proposed Mining District, meet the site selection criteria that have been set. These sites are Hurley, Gile, Montreal, Pence, and the Plummer Mine Headframe.

As told by its historic architecture, each of these sites contributes an important and unique revelation to understanding the impact of iron mining within the District. Yet each site is linked to the other by the common theme of the human and natural resources that became entwined with the extraction of iron ore which will result in a holistic interpretation of the historic significance of the Penokee Iron Range District.

- Interpretative Recommendations for District

Tours

- ▶ Walking tours- self guided
- ▶ Walking tours- guided
- ▶ Bike tours
- ▶ ATV/Snowmobile tours
- ▶ Cross country ski trail tours
- ▶ Bus tours
- ▶ Auto tours

Brochures/Literature

- ▶ Interpretative/directional tour guides
- ▶ Media releases
- ▶ Promotional posters
- ▶ Incorporating interpretative information into existing county brochures
- ▶ Penokee Iron Range District Report and resulting research base
- ▶ Inclusion in state heritage tourism brochures

Public Education

- ▶ Hospitality & Heritage Tourism training for service sector
- ▶ Historic property enhancement training and consultation
- ▶ Heritage tourism awareness seminars & media releases

Signage

- Interpretative signage at each site
- Directional sign to each site

Other

- Development of historically based special events
- Private Owner Cooperator's Program
- Enactment of historic preservation ordinances
- Assistance to obtain historic preservation tax credits
- Listing of potentially eligible properties on the National Historic Register of Historic Places