

## History of Edgemere.

Edgemere is about 1 mile West of Redridge on the road to Freda. The road named Edgemere Lane does not go to Edgemere; it goes down to private property that once was the Baltic Stamp Mill area.

This history is shared by Judy Sharrar, granddaughter of Abel Heltunen. Abel worked from 1901 to 1917 as a fireman at the Adventure Stamp Mill, keeping the furnaces going for the mill. He became the mill's watchman from 1917 to 1939. When the mill was liquidated Able then received property for his watchman wages over those years. He bought one of the homes in Edgemere location for \$50 and later gave it to his son Emil and wife Catherine to live in the fall of 1939 to 1977. The present owner inherited the parent's property. In 1978 when Copper Range Mining Co. decided to sell off their land she bought the lake property which was the site of the stamp mill.



Abel is on the far right of this picture at the Edgemere railroad depot.

The Edgemere location came into existence in 1901-02 because the Adventure Mining Company in Greenland Michigan needed a place by the water to stamp out the copper ore. Thus they bought the land and built Edgemere.

Edgemere Stamp Mill closed in 1917 and buildings were torn down in 1939.

### The Mine.

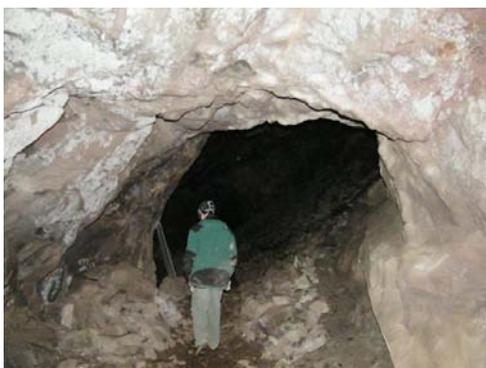
The Adventure Mine in Greenland brought its copper rock on a train to Edgemere to be stamped.

Other stamp mills during that same time period were: 1) On the East side of Redridge's Salmon Trout River was the Atlantic Stamp Mill stamping rock from the Atlantic Mine. 2) On the West side of the Salmon Trout River in Redridge was the Baltic Stamp Mill stamping Baltic

Mine rock. 3) In Beacon Hill there was the Trimountain Stamp Mill stamping rock from Trimountain Mine. 4) In Freda there was the Champion Stamp Mill with rock coming from Painesdale's Champion Mine.

Wikipedia.org site on Keweenaw National Park shares: The Adventure Mining Company operated in Greenland from 1850-1920 and consisted of 5 shafts, one of which descended 1,300 feet beneath the surface. The mine never turned a profit.

The Adventure Mining Company currently (2010) offers tours of the surface and underground portions of the Adventure Mine. <http://www.adventureminetours.com>



### **Resources to learn more about the Mine:**

From [MTU archive documents](#) in the Edgemere vertical file and the Adventure Mine Annual reports:

- Edgemere was 150' above lake level.
- Copper Range railroad had a "depot" in Edgemere.
- The School was a one room building housing 30 students. It was located near the 2 rows of homes. Paulette Morin says it was by roadside on right hand side going to Beacon Hill. It was built in July of 1902 with \$1000, housing K-8 grades. High School students took the school train.

- Charles L Lawton was General Supt of the Adventure Consolidated Copper Company in Greenland in at least 1909 and 1911. (See topic of Mines and Statistics under Chapter on Redridge on stantontownship.com for more information on Mr. Lawton who has present day relatives in Stanton Township).
- The stamp mill was shut down in Jan. 1908, and liquidated around 1935.
- Production in 1902 was 606,211 pounds refined copper. In 1903 it was 3,000,000.
- In 1903 the mill was using 2 heads with day shifts only and treating 400 tons daily. Improvements were made: an office, smithy, machine shop, dwellings (second row of duplexes?). Also had 8-12 feet deep water dock which allowed, weather permitting, for landing of cargo in good weather.
- in 1904- "Too early as yet to say the Adventure is out of the woods, but its prospects are fair, where as a year ago they scarcely could have been worse."

Adventure Mining Company Since 1850 by Dianne R. Portfleet sold at the Adventure Mine tour gift shop. Excerpts are:

- p. 123: The Adventure Consolidated Copper Company, organized under laws of Michigan in 1898 had 1, 288 shareholders of record on Jan. 1, 1901. Principal office was 45 Broadway, New York. Transfer agent Old Colony Trust Co. in Boston. ...Superintendent was PR Robert, Thos Trevorrow mining captain and SA Prince Clerk.

- p. 124: The mineral lands of the company are located in Sections 35 and 36, Township 51 North, Range 38 West, and in sections 1 and 2 of T 50 North and Range 39 W. .. The villages of Greenland and Maple Grove are close.

The old Adventure Mine was opened in 1850 with largest production in 1857. A long line of pits were found along the outcrop of the Knowlton and on several of adjoining beds by the first white men to visit the property.

For forty years the Adventure had been worked by tributors (individuals to mine on their own and pay a percentage of the profits to the company on p. 139) in search of both copper and silver, and while some failed in their quest, many succeeded.

p. 125: The first production of the Adventure Consolidated was made in November 1900 when 18 tons of mass and barrel work were sent to the Quincy smelter and gave returns of 12 tons ingot worth about \$4000.

p. 127: A branch of the copper Range Railroad was built to the mine from Belt three miles away in 1901 giving needed transportation facilities.

A mill site was selected on the shore of Lake Superior in the spring of 1901 and ground was broken for foundations in May. In December 1901, the structural steel was nearly all up and much of the machinery is on the ground. The contract for mill and equipment was undertaken by the Allis-Chalmers Co. The mill proper is 134 x 215' in size, with adjoining boiler house 60 x 71 and pump house 38 x 72.

(p. 164: Land cleared at mill site in late March. Constructed there were a boarding -house 56 x 26 feet and dormitory 44 x 26 feet; also an office and warehouse 26 x 40 feet. We have built five double -dwellings and built the mill foundations, foundations for the coal bin and boiler house 72 x 72 and pump house 69 feet6 6 inches x 36 feet 6 inches. PR Roberts Superintendent)

(Back to page 127)

The Mill will have 3 Allis Chalmers stamps fitted with coarse screens and round

mortars. The jigs will be of the Hodge improved pattern. There will also be Evans' slime tables and 6 Wilfley concentrators – two for each stamp. The rock bins will have shuts by gravity. The pump will be a Riedler with daily capacity of 16 million gallons. Water will be obtained temporarily through an iron pipe from the lake. It eventually will be secured through a 1,200 foot tunnel starting at the bottom of an 80 foot well and having its intake under 35 ' of water in Lake Superior. The tunnel will not be completed before the end of 1902.

Improvements at the mill site include a spur of the Lake Shore branch of the Copper Range Railroad, office building, smithy, machine shop, hotel, 5 dwellings etc. There is 8 – 12 feet of clear water off –shore, permitting tugs and scows to and cargoes in fair weather. Henry Keys is the superintendent at the mill.

p 173. Roberts as Superintendent reports Jan. 10 1903: It was expected that we would be able to start the mill about June 1 but on account of the delay occasioned by the non-delivery of machinery and building material, which in several cases were over a year behind hand, the effect of these delays on the part of various contractors was to crowd all of our work into a limited space of time rendering its execution more difficult and expensive. The first experimental start could not be made until Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> and then for only a few hours – Number 2 and 3 heads were started running regularly early in October, and have been running most of the time since, the stoppages have only been for short periods to facilitate making slight repairs. Our main trouble has been with the “jigs” and number one stamp head, causing us a great deal of annoyance, as certain minor parts were defective. These parts are now being replaced by the contractors without cost to us.

The tunnel under Lake Superior, for supplying the mill with water, was finished about Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, when it had reached a point about 900 feet from shore, where the depth of water is about 23 feet. We were unable to induce contractors to do the necessary work of drilling holes from the bottom of the Lake to the head of the tunnel, a distance of 24 feet thru rock, so were obliged to do the work ourselves, which in itself was simple; although in doing the work we were greatly interfered with by the continued roughness of Lake Superior connections were finally made and the tunnel went into use Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.

We constructed 5 double dwelling, carpenter shop, smith shop, assay office, and an additional coal trestle where we can store about 15,000 tons.

At the mill from October to December we have stamped 42,904 tons of rock, from which was saved 689,120 lbs mineral; this with the 203,414 lbs of mass and barrel copper from the mine make total mineral produce during this time 892,534 lbs.

p. 170. Charles Devereaux President in Feb 1903 reports: The stamp mill, which commenced stamping rock late in September 1902 over 6 months later than promised by contractors, was found to be defective in many parts, but excepting “jig’s (washing machines) needed only mechanical changes or adjustment. The “jigs” were so radically wrong it was found necessary to replace the machinery directly connected with the “tubs” and as this took time, rather than entirely stop the mill, have been trying to keep the mill going while making repairs, thus running in a crippled condition since starting operations. All imperfect work the contractors are required to make good. The delay thus occasioned has proved costly in loss of valuable time and consequently money. The great delay in getting in good running order, has deprived us on an income from copper which we otherwise would have had, and therefore made it necessary to call upon stockholders for a larger amount of money to meet expenses than was anticipated.

p. 196 1905 Mining Gazette's Annual Copper Review for Adventure Mine: The

shipments of rock, which averaged about 400 tons daily early in the year, were increased to about 480 tons daily by May.

p. 191 8/27/1905 Daily Mining Gazette: "Shipments of rock from Adventure have been resumed and mill will start Monday. It has been closed for 3 weeks as a result of a difference between the men and management at the mine"

p. 139 Although over 2 million dollars was invested in the mine, and it was considered to be one of the most promising mines in the area, it was a disappointment to the investors. ... the mine never paid its investors any dividends. The Company was closed in 1917 because of the expense and difficulty of getting the pure metal.

p. 144 date line of activities: 1902 Edgemere Stamp Mill opens but followed by defective lawsuit. The ore was stamped at the Baltic in Redridge and in Winona. The copper was smelted at Quincy Mining Company Smelter in Ripley.

1908 Only exploratory work done at mine due to drop in copper price.

(page 221: Hitchcock as Superintendent wrote to Charles L. Lawton General Superintendent for Adventure Consolidated Copper Company Mine Office Hancock MI Sept. 6, 1909 about work done at the mine for the past year.

(page 226: In another report of Dec. 9, 1909 Hitchcock write to Lawton: The Stamp Mill has remained idle all the year but is in good condition and is looked after at all times by watchmen.) CL Lawton's relatives are local families in Stanton Township in 2010.

Adventure Mine was opened to take advantage of WW1 subsidies but closed after the war in 1917 when the subsidy was removed.

1938 Adventure Consolidated Copper Company liquidated. Mining equipment was scraped and sold for salvage. Some land sold to individuals and some reverts to the State of MI for non-payment of taxes during the depression.

1972 Jack and Margaret Neph purchase Adventure Mine. Mine tours started in 1973.

p. 253. In 2003 the mine closed to the public for tours. In 2004 Matthew Portfleet, a Mining Engineer graduate of Michigan Technological University, and his wife Victoria Portfleet, a Surveying Engineer from MTU, purchased the Old Adventure Mine and reopened it in the Spring of 2005 again.

A book Adventure Story by Jack Neph who owned the Adventure Mine is about copper mining in old Adventure Mine. The book was written in 1976 and reprinted in 1980. One page has info on the stamp mill:

#### ADVENTURE STAMP MILL

To process the rock from the expanded production of Adventure Consolidated a stamp mill was built in 1901 near the Salmon Trout River at Edgemere (Redridge) on Lake Superior. In line with the policy of "nothing but the best" for Adventure, the mill was built and equipped by the Allis Chalmers Company.

The mill buildings were of steel on stone foundations, with a 60' x 72' boiler house and a 32' x 72' pump house. The equipment, stamps, jigs, slime tables, concentrators and mills, were of the latest design. The pump had a 16,000,000 gallon capacity, drawing its supply through a tunnel extending 1,200 feet out in Lake Superior.

The mill began operation in 1902 and was plagued from the start with mechanical problems which eventually resulted in a suit against Allis Chalmers. The necessary corrections were completed in 1904 only to have new problems with the water intake and the stamp foundations. Complete rebuilding of the foundations was necessary and was completed in 1907.

The mill then was in top condition and operating at peak efficiency in 1908 when both the percentage of copper in the rock being mined and the price of copper dropped. The mill was closed and put in storage.

The mill was maintained during the next few years during the drilling of number 5 shaft and other exploratory work at the mine site, but was eventually closed for good and the machinery salvaged when the mine closed following World War I.

Only a few old buildings, foundations and a pile of stamp sand remain.

## Edgemere Community

It was called Edgemere because it was located on the very edge of a sandstone projection overlooking Lake Superior at a height of about 150 feet above lake level.



The location included many buildings up on the cliff and the Stamp Mill was down by the Lake.

The 20 family housing community was composed of two rows of five duplex homes. There was one row of 5 buildings on the North side which had long sloping roofs facing south. The south row of five houses opposite each house on north had sloping roofs facing north.

Each house had clapboard siding.

Each wooden- frame building housed two families. One family lived on east side and one on west side. Each family home had 5 rooms. Three rooms were on first floor and 2 rooms were upstairs. The kitchen was inside the entry. Next was the dining room and at the back a living room. Upstairs were 2 bedrooms.

In the area between the rows of houses were 5 outhouses. They too were duplexes like each house. Each side had 2 seats.

### Edgemere families recalled hearing about between 1900 and 1920's were:

Tony Hauswirth, John Isaacson, Erick Karvakko, Matt Kyllonen, Laakso, Lampi, Manninen, John and Nester Raisanen, Rothberg; Schrader; Sharkey, Simon Simonson, Solmonson; Stein; Westenberg.

(Barb adds: the 1910 census has the following families listed as being on Edgemere Road: (names that can be made legible – John Manninen laborer, Oscar and John Kappler laborers, Frank Aho laborer, Matti ?something Koski laborer, Joseph Martin salesman for general store, Andrew Hiltunen (Heltunen) watchman and his son Fred age 17 as laborer at mill, Erick Karsko (Karvakko ) laborer at mill, Fred Sherman machine shop, Charles Schroeder machine shop, Joseph Riffola or Rippola carpenter shop, Frank Sharky laborer, William Kohl laborer.

The Heltunen family consisted of Andrew (Able) age 44 immigrated in 1888, wife Matilda 37 immigrated 1889, Annie (Laina) 18, Fred 17, Esther (later to be Mrs. Peterson, teacher) 14, Henry 12, Esais (Emil) 8, Wilhart 5, Julia 4, Ellen 2, and Edna 7 months.

### The School.

It also had a wood-frame school for grades 1-5 from 9 AM to 4 PM. For grades 6-8 (sometimes up to 10<sup>th</sup>) students walked to school in Redridge. In High School students took the Copper Range School Train to Painesdale High School in Painesdale. (See article on school train in Schools section of website). The school superintendent in Redridge during that time was Mr. Erickson and later Mr. Casswell. Edgemere School was located south of the houses. It is known that at least one teacher was Miss Jordan. The assumption is the school closed when the mill did in 1917.



This is a picture of Edgemere students at the beach.



Esther Heltunen is 8<sup>th</sup> from the left... She later became Mrs. Peterson, and taught school. Esther was born in 1896 and went to Edgemere so we know the school was open in at least in 1902 (also the year the stamp mill opened for operation). We know she taught for at least one year at the Trasti School in 1917 or so, on the recommendation of Supt. E B Holman.

### Buildings:

There were log buildings, built in various locations around the mill site that single men

built and lived in.

Other buildings were a boarding house west of the mill on top of hill, horse barns, carpenter shop, machine shop, and assay office. The pay office and Superintendent house were in the same building to the west of the mill by the lake.

### **Railroad.**

Copper Range Railroad had a one-room railroad depot at Edgemere. It was south of the hamlet for residents, and children traveling on the school train. The railroad was south of the community and the present day road.

The railroad spur bringing the copper rock and taking away the copper to be smelted was between the houses and the mill. A mound of dirt remains that was the “Y” railroad spur coming from Beacon Hill to the Edgemere stamp mill. This spur was owned by the Adventure Mining Company and the main grade being owned by Copper Range. The spur grade ended just east Edgemere. The train then backed up towards Freda to get back on the main line.

There possibly could have been 50-60 cars of rock dumped into the bins at top of the stamp mill per day.

### **The stamp mill.**

From the housing complex to the mill there was a short cut path the workers used.

The area was open, no trees. They were cut down for building the homes.

To get to the mill one traveled down a horse traveled steep hill. The hill side had many springs and mud making travel difficult.

At the bottom of the hill were the pump house and boiler house. The dimensions were 60 x 72 feet for the boiler house and the pump house was 32 x 72.



This foundation believed to be the boiler house is constructed of Jacobsville sandstone. Walls are approx. 8 feet high and about 1.5 feet thick. On the lake wall is an arch, most likely for the intake pipe. On the east side is a hole in the wall up higher. Most likely taking the steam to operate the “stamps” etc or water to wash the crushed rock from the ore (or was that the function also of the pump house?)

Then one approached the pay office and Superintendent’s house. (On the right of the picture below).



Past the home was the Stamp Mill. This stamp mill had different stamping machinery than the other mills. This one used “3 heads” equipment to break the rock to extract the copper. Other mills used “ball mills” to break the copper ore.



Notice the train trestle at the top of the mill.

There were 4 levels to the stamp mill.



- 1) The lower level had what appeared to be “U” shaped troughs on the far north side, we assume for the discharged stamp sand or for the water that separated the sand from the ore.



Once the stamp sand filled the bay towards Redridge. It has since washed with currents toward Stanton North Park. In 1956-1962 Copper Range hired Yalmer Mattila Construction Company and 1962-1968 Gregory Trucking to reclaim some of the stamp sands in Redridge taking the sand to the Freda Mill.

This level we figured was where the washing or slime tables were that shook the crushed rock. Water washed the stamp sand away and the copper left was taken back up the hill in trams on the east side of mill to the train level to be shipped out.



- 2) Another level was a concrete floor with metal embedded into the floor. Assumption this was the location of the stamp heads.



At this level one could see the smoke stack base in the woods to the west.

- 3) The upper levels. One wall had raised sections that aligned with holes in the back wall of that level. These holes might have been the chutes for the rock.
- 4) The next level was the surrounding ground level for the train. Pictures show a covered area for the rock cars above the mill. Rock would drop into the upper level to begin the stamping process.

Where did they get the soil for the railroad track mounds? The story goes there were “borrow pits”. Men borrowed soil from these locations and brought to the mound site.

Past the mill was the Assay office where they did lab work to determine the copper ore content of the rock. A current building was constructed in 1978 on the original foundation.

Clarification of story of EB Holman having the Assay cottage: Messner and EB did not own it. They may have used it in the 40's., but the road to it was too much difficult and they had to walk in.. so they abandoned the idea.

Loggers:

There were logging companies in the area of Edgemere – Dionne (in Beacon Hill west of houses), Messner (Stanwood), and Blazer(east of Beacon Hill)

**The Adventure Mining Company liquidated in 1938.** The Mill and many buildings were sold for lumber. Lumber is known to be used in many homes, barns, garages, homes in the area.

One story from the present owner of Edgemere property was her father used scrap lumber left from buildings to build a 2 story gas station/garage by the main Road in Edgemere in the early 40's for a year or two. Three slime tables were used to build a wood shed.

Researched by Barb Koski-- Osma Plat Road Houghton, Michigan. Permission by land owner to add to web site November 2010.