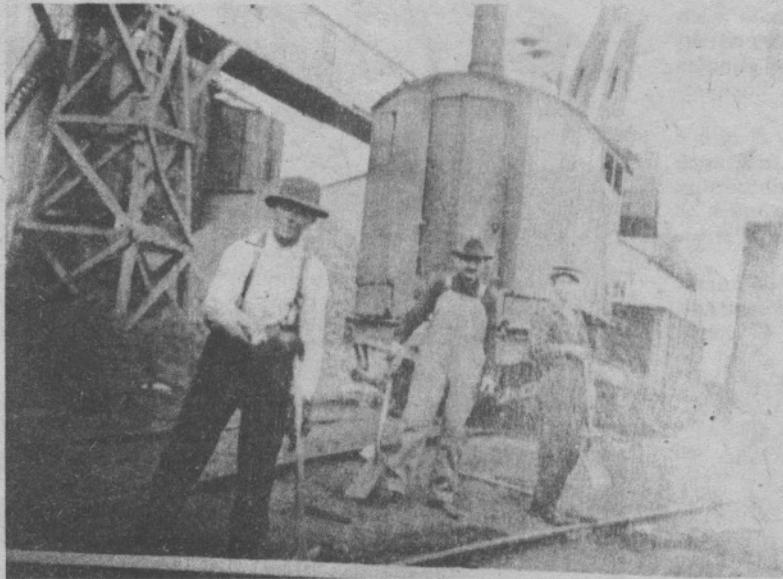


# Goudreau's Rich Mineral Warehouse Awaits Exploitation



By D. E. Pugh

Goudreau station like the abandoned village at mile 178 on the ACR, ten miles north of Hawk Junction, is boarded up and closed. Yet Goudreau, once the hub of a bustling mining community totalling over 1,000 people possessed a 115 room three storey hotel, whose present dark cement foundations, 1½ miles north of Goudreau, surpasses any structure in Wawa.

During 1917 and 1918 Goudreau was the best source in North America, if not in the world for iron pyrites, "the life blood of the war effort". Pyrites with 40% iron and 27% sulphur, provided the sulphur used in sulphuric acid and explosives. The sulphur extracted from Goudreau ore in Texas eventually found its destination in Canadian and British shells exploding over German trenches.

Omer Boucher, now 75, and for 46 years an employee of the ACR recalls his arrival in 1917 to Goudreau. Travelling the narrow gauge railway spur, he recalls passing the massive electrical steam

generating plant, the brown repair depot sheds which rebuilt the gigantic engines from ball bearings to drive shafts, and the looming bulk of the ore crusher. As an employee of the Nichols Chemical Company, he paid \$1.00 per month for room and board and lived with 300 men in the massive hotel which boasted of pool halls, laundry rooms, a doctor, Saturday movies and the best of food. The English owned hotel maintained strict British decorum even in the Northern woods. Regulations forced shedding of work clothing in the vast basement, which accommodated showers for eighty men, and only neatly dressed, washed and groomed men were permitted upstairs.

Every day from 1914 to 1918, crews of eight to ten men jack hammered, drilled and blasted. Mucking with three huge coal fired steam shovels fed the vital pyrites onto small narrow gauge cars, which delivered this precious metal to the crusher. The pulverizer ore was then taken by

a spur line to the ACR and delivered to the Wawa harbour for shipment to Texas.

By 1918, 400,000 tons of pyrite was removed from a deposit estimated 300 feet by 40 feet. The Rand Consolidated Mines Limited also mined a few thousand tons and maintained its hotel within the village of Goudreau itself.

With the conclusion of World War I, British demands terminated for explosives. Both companies were closed, a caretaker was appointed and the town abandoned. Nevertheless the high iron content pyrite mineral remained, and was exploited between 1958 and 1962 to the extent of over one million tons by the Algoma Steel Corporation to feed the Wawa sinter plant. The high sulphur content and the resulting devastation of vegetation west of Wawa led to the abandonment of this practice.

With growing iron demands and increasing technology, Goudreau may once again become a flourishing iron mining community.

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