

*Marsella C. Nelson*

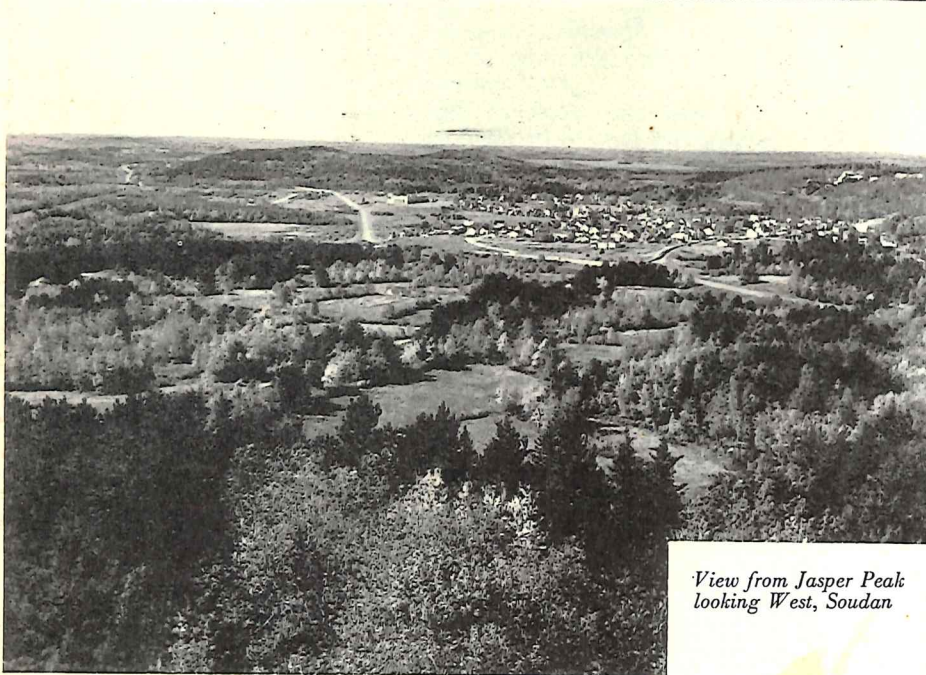
# TOWER-SOUDAN'S

*"Cradle of the Iron Industry"*

*Celebration  
of*



*Tower,  
Looking  
East*



*View from Jasper Peak  
looking West, Soudan*



**AUGUST 9-10  
1958**

# MINNESOTA CENTENNIAL



The first council meeting was held on November 26th. Subsequent Presidents were: John G. Brown, William H. Bassett and William N. Shephard.

The Mining Company donated part of North Second Street for Churches in 1885. The Catholic and Presbyterian Churches were built in that year. Later on the Lutheran, Episcopal, and the Mission Covenant Churches were built.

Tower became a city in April 1889, with William N. Shephard, former Village President, being elected to first Mayor. He also served from 1893 to 1895. Among those who have served the city in this capacity are J. D. Murphy who was elected twice, and Herman T. Olson who served three times, covering a period of ten years; a record.

In 1890, a streetcar carried the miners to and from the Soudan Mine. It was drawn by an engine over a narrow track. This car made ten trips each day. It was abandoned in 1899.

The same year, the Tower Electric Light and Improvement Company was organized to furnish the City with electricity. For this privilege they were to build a substantial hotel in the City which was the old "U.S." Hotel. In 1899, the City bought this plant and operated it themselves with their own employes. The plant soon became obsolete and had to be replaced. It was at this time that Mayor Chas. Roland conceived the idea of building a hydro-electric plant at Pike River. The citizens generally objected to this because it was feared that Pike River, where it was to be built, did not have sufficient water supply. This proved to be true. The plant was built in 1912 at a cost of about \$35,000.00 which placed an indebtedness on the city that was not liquidated until 1925.

Fortunately for the city, the Minnesota Power & Light Company came into this area, and in 1924 the city gave them a franchise to furnish the city with light and power which they have done in a most satisfactory manner up to the present time.

The present City Hall was erected in 1939 at a cost of \$75,000.00.

SOUDAN received its name from Don H. Bacon, then President of the Minnesota Iron Company. The name was suggested because of publicity then being given to the African Soudan. John Owens owned the sawmill which then produced the timber for the first houses. The first to be built was the Frank St. Vincent house. The first church, still standing, was the Methodist Church. It was decided, very early, that Soudan should be a mining location and that no business house should be erected there. In 1886, the first Post Office was started, and in 1891 a hospital was built; it was badly needed. The Fire Hall and Oliver barn were built in 1899. Electricity was installed in the mine in 1924, and construction of the water system was begun. Cement sidewalks were started in 1939.

#### **Tower-Soudan Pioneers**

CHARLEMAGNE TOWER, son of Reuben and Deborah Tower, was born in Portio Township, Oneida County, New York, April 18, 1809; went to school at the Academy in Oxford, New York, at thirteen years of age, and taught school and clerked in Utica for two years. He entered Harvard University in 1827. After graduation, he studied law and established his first office in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, where he bought and sold coal lands, with his business associate Samuel Munson; lived there until 1875, when he moved to Philadelphia. He had seven children; one boy, Charlemagne Tower, Jr., and six girls. He served as Captain of the local regiment in the Union Army. During the next few years he engaged in many business activities, including the Northern Pacific Railroad.

In 1875, George C. Stone visited Tower and told him of the Iron Ore discoveries on the Vermilion Range. He bought Vermilion lands, and with Edward Breitung organized the Minnesota Iron Company prior to 1882. With the assistance of State Senator Charles H. Graves, he made plans to gain control of the recently organized Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, in order to secure a means of shipping the mined ore from Tower-Soudan to Agate Bay. This he did on March 1, 1882. With the development of the Railroad and the shipment of iron ore from the Vermilion Range, Tower was responsible for one of the greatest commercial events of the Nineteenth Century.

Although the City of Tower, Minnesota is one of five named for him in the United States, Charlemagne Tower never visited here. He died July 24, 1889. His eventful life of eighty years demonstrates how a man "can pull himself up by his own bootstraps" and emerge from bankruptcy to become a millionaire.

CHARLEMAGNE TOWER, JR., was born at a hotel in Philadelphia, April 17, 1845. He was educated at the Russell Military Academy, New Haven, and the Phillips Exeter Academy, New Hampshire, and entered Harvard University in 1869. Because of ill health, his father sent him to Spain in 1871. Graduating in 1872, he spent four years in Europe. On his return he was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Philadelphia. During this period he was with his father in many of his financial affairs. He came to Tower in 1882 as Treasurer of the Minnesota Iron Company which Tower Senior controlled at that time. In 1880, he became the third President of the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad and let the contract for construction of the Road from Tower-Soudan to the Lake, to the John C. Wolf Company. He worked hard to have the road built by the prescribed date, viz: July 1884. He rode on the first ore train and participated in the loading ceremonies at Two Harbors. Later financial difficulties beset the Road and he resigned as an Officer, but continued his interest until it was sold. Charlemagne Tower, Jr., was then appointed Ambassador to Russia and Germany by President McKinley. He retired in 1908.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, a native of Pottsville, Pennsylvania, was the son-in-law of Charlemagne Tower. Educated at Lawrence Scientific School at Cambridge. He was a competent surveyor and accompanied George R. Stuntz on the original survey for iron ore on the Vermilion Range, made for Charlemagne Tower in 1875, journeying from Duluth up the Saint Louis River by canoe. Lee, on account of his scientific background, was very helpful in determining the quality of ore samples sent to Tower from the Tower-Soudan area. On March 1, 1882, he became a stockholder and Chief Engineer of the newly organized Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, having made the first rough survey in 1881 and the final survey the next year. He recommended to President Charlemagne Tower, Jr., the letting of the construction contract, to James S. Wolf Company, Ottumwa, Iowa, at 12,519 dollars per mile and moved his office to Two Harbors so as to be closer to the work, where one thousand men were employed building the road. At the completion and the arrival of the first ore train, on which he rode from Tower, it was a great satisfaction to him to participate in the final ceremonies at Two Harbors. Lee remained as Vice President of the Railroad until it was sold to the Syndicate in 1887.

EDWARD BREITUNG, a German immigrant, born November 10, 1831, in Schalka, Germany, was educated at the College of Mining Meninige. He came to Michigan in 1879. He opened the Republic Mine here, and was elected to Congress in 1883-1885; became interested in the Vermilion enterprise in 1882, at the suggestion of Charlemagne Tower, Jr. He

was four-tenths owner and Vice President of the Minnesota Iron Company. One of the early shallow pits in the Soudan Mine was named for him. He purchased \$100,000 worth of bonds of the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad in October, 1883 and assisted in its early financing. Later he made further investments in Lake Vermilion ore lands. His health failed and he died at Negaunee, Michigan, March 3, 1887. The Tower-Soudan Township is named Breitung in his honor.

GEORGE CALVIN STONE was born in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, November 11, 1822. He started business at the age of twenty, in Iowa. Working as a clerk during the Civil War, he had an opportunity to go to Duluth in 1869, as assistant to General George B. Sargent, who opened its first bank. He was elected Duluth City Treasurer in 1870. After the panic of 1873, he began to think about iron ore in the district north of Duluth. After his inspection of the Vermilion he journeyed East with ore samples in April, 1875. On his trip he showed these samples and told his story to many industrialists who turned him down because they thought if iron ore was really here, it would take a fortune to build a railroad over the swamps to haul the ore to the lake. He then visited Charlemagne Tower in Philadelphia, being the first man to bring to him the story of the Vermilion Range. Stone then became identified with the plans to organize the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, participating in its legal battles and becoming its second President. A fight for control of the Railroad developed between Stone and Charlemagne Tower, Jr., which Tower, with the help of his father, won. Stone stayed with the Railroad until the stock was sold to a Syndicate May 2, 1887. His life came to a tragic end on October 25, 1900, when he was accidentally asphyxiated by gas in his room at the old Kitchi Gammi Club on First Street in Duluth.

GEORGE R STUNTZ was born at Albion, Pennsylvania, December 11, 1820; studied engineering at the Grand River Institute, Ohio. He came as a Government surveyor, to Duluth in 1852, four years before it was platted. At that time he stated "that in his opinion, here was the heart of the Continent, commercially." His first trip to the Lake Vermilion region seeking coal, was made in 1875; instead of coal, he found iron ore there, and was afterwards recognized as the first to do this. By 1881, he was able to convince Charlemagne Tower of the valuable deposits in the Tower-Soudan region.

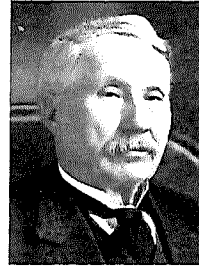
Stuntz also assisted in the survey of the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad and became recognized as one of the outstanding and accomplished surveyors in Northern Minnesota.

His last act in the Vermilion Range drama was to present two papers to the Minnesota Academy of Natural Sciences on "Early Life in Northeastern Minnesota" and the "Mound Builders." He died October 3, 1902, at the age of eighty-one years. One of our greatest discoverers, he made money for others, but died penniless, after living a hard but intensive life. After his death his pioneering achievements were recognized by naming Stuntz Township (Hibbing) in his honor.

ELISHA MORCOM was born in Cornwall, England, May 5, 1835; had his schooling there and went to work as a miner at fifteen years of age. He came to Philadelphia at the age of nineteen and later worked in Michigan where he assisted in developing the Chapin Mine and was elected to the State Legislature in 1882. He came to Soudan as Superintendent of the Minnesota Iron Company in 1884. He brought the first real group of miners here from Quinesec, Michigan, hardy family men who could be depended upon. Morcom was a good organizer although a strict disciplinarian. The development of the Soudan Mine, in its early stages, was

due to his skillful planning and the improvements in safe methods, which he made possible. As Superintendent, he often had disagreements with the Officers. In 1889, he was sent to Cuba during the Spanish-American War. At the Chicago World's Fair in 1892, he was in charge of the mining exhibit. He then returned to Tower where he died in November, 1908.

### Lumber Industry



JOHN OWENS

Although the first attractions to this wilderness area were the gold mines and the iron ore—to those who were interested in lumbering business, the fine stands of virgin Norway and White Pine timber were of interest. Large numbers of cruisers, loggers and others took advantage of their rights to file on these timbered lands. This brought on the practice of "jumping" claims that had already been filed. It was a case of the best man wins. The story goes that there was bitter feeling between a man by the name of Phillips, and one named W. H. Cook, both of whom were trying to get title to as much timber as possible. The upshot of this feud was that one morning at Tower, Phillips got together an angry mob for the purpose of lynching Cook, but Cook was warned and made his escape up the track to the depot where he jumped into the baggage car of the morning train that was just pulling out. He went to Virginia where he organized the Virginia & Rainy Lake Lumber Company. This company built a railroad (now the DWP) up to his timber holdings, and hauled the timber to Virginia where his company built what was reported to be the largest white pine sawmill in the world. Thus, was the future destiny of Tower changed over a rather insignificant affair.

The first lumber to be cut here was by John Owens who operated the mill for the mining company at first, but later bought them out and established his own company.

Other companies to follow were the Howe Lumber Company, the Tower Lumber Company which was the largest of them all, Alger-Smith Company, Cook & Ketchum, Trout Lake Lumber Company, Vermilion Lumber Company, and Pike Bay Lumber Company.

The Tower Lumber Company, operating from 1900 to 1909, employed some five hundred men in their sawmill, planing mill, and lumber yard. It was a year-around operation. In addition to this they employed as high as two thousand men during the winter months in their many logging camps. As the logs were cut they were then hauled to "landings" on the lake and when spring came and the lake opened again, the logs were assembled into large rafts and towed down the lake by strong, steam tugboats to the mill here on Pike Bay. In order to have a high water level the logging companies built the first dam at Vermilion River by building up the banks on either side of the river and then placing bags of sand across the stream. At Trout Lake they built a dam on Trout River from which they built a "sluiceway" down to Vermilion and then as the logs were towed down Trout Lake they were sluiced into Vermilion and then towed again to Tower. The same practice was followed at Pike River to get their "log drives" down in the spring. They had a sluice there also to take care of the logs that were "driven" down Pike River from the camps where they were cut during the winter. These lumber companies brought to this community a large volume of business that has had much to do with the upbuilding and the success of those who were in business here during that period.

Martin Gundersen started from scratch but he was a willing hard worker. He made a phenomenal success in the lumber and timber business, and was one of the organizers of the Pike Bay Lumber Company which was sold to the present owners who now operate under the name of the Minnesota Box Manufacturing Company in Tower.

Although the virgin timber is nearly depleted in this section, there still remains a good supply of second growth timber that will produce a considerable amount of pulpwood for many years to come.

### Lake Vermilion

TOWER-SOUDAN, one of the first tourist cities in the Minnesota Arrowhead Country, is the gateway to beautiful Lake Vermilion. The Chippewa Indians still live here at Boise Fort Village, and call Lake Vermilion "Lake of the Sunset Glow," because of the beautiful sunsets seen on the lake.

Lake Vermilion is nearly forty miles long, with over twelve hundred miles of beautiful wooded and beach shore line.

There are seventy-three vacation resorts of every description that cater to the many thousands of visitors who come here each year from all parts of the United States, Canada and Mexico. It also has places of historical interest on its shores. There are ruins of old cabins, trading posts, and Indian burial grounds. The first motor boat on the lake was named Comet. It was wrecked in Big Bay and so Comet Island got its name. It is said to have been the scene of many hard-fought battles between the two Indian tribes which inhabited this country in the early days, the Chippewas and the Sioux. More than one hundred fifty years ago, a trading post was established at the "Narrows" near Tower by the Hudson Bay Company and was in charge of a man by the name of McLaughlin.

One of its outstanding features is the number of private houses built around its shores. These number nearly four thousand. They have mostly been built by visitors who found here everything they desired for a summer home. Among them is Doctor Preston Bradley, the nationally known Pastor of the People's Church of Chicago. He owns an island on the lake where he has built a home on which he has spent four months of each year for the past thirty-nine years. Dr. Bradley is a conservationist in every sense of the word, and advertises this Region on his many radio programs. The Izaak Walton League Chapter at Tower is named for him.

The lake is the headquarters of rivers flowing northward to Hudson Bay. It has long been famous for its Walleyed and Northern pike fishing. Muskies, Crappies, Bass and Trout are found here and in nearby lakes. Those who like sailboating find large reaches of open water and good harbors. All of the main boat channels are carefully marked by "Buoys" which are furnished and taken care of by St. Louis County through a special fund sent up for that purpose. Walter A. Aronson, the pioneer boatman on the lake is the "mailman" during the summer months. He has a contract with the government to deliver mail to the resorts and private cabins along an eighty-seven mile route.

### Vermilion Range Old Settlers' Association

This association, organized in 1914, is what the name implies. The group meets annually at McKinley Park on Lake Vermilion on the third Saturday in July. This makes an

opportunity for the pioneers to get together and recount some of the happenings in the early years on the Vermilion Range.

Qualifications for membership states that the applicant must have lived here twenty or more years.

At the re-union, a program is arranged by a committee appointed by the President for that purpose. They select a speaker conversant with the area and its problems.

### Places of Interest

**JASPER PEAK:** This is the highest hill in the area. It is called Jasper because it is hard stone. It is sixteen hundred and fifty feet above sea level. On top is a lookout tower used by Forest Rangers to spot fires. This is one of the finest attractions in the Arrowhead.

**McKINLEY MONUMENT:** This monument was the first erected in memory of President McKinley assassinated at Buffalo in 1901. It was built two weeks after his death. The rock with which it was built was excavated from the Soudan Mine. It was dedicated November 19, 1901. Governor Van Sant and his staff were present. Special trains came from Duluth and the Range towns. The procession, over half a mile long, included four bands and many historical groups. Mayor J. D. Murphy presided with John Owens and J. Adam Bede as speakers. The Governor delivered the dedicatory address at the time of President McKinley's death. Don H. Bacon was then Superintendent of the Soudan Mine. It has been reliably told that the President and Bacon were close friends and had attended the same school in Ohio, which is the reason for the erection of this monument here.

### Tower-Soudan Schools

The school boards and people of the communities have kept an active interest in the schools and have maintained a curriculum from kindergarten through the Twelfth Grade which aims to develop moral stamina, physical vigor, mental health, basic skills, scientific knowledge and civic competence in boys and girls and adults of the district. High school graduates are fully accredited by the State Department of Education and many graduates have gone on to successful careers in their own homes, in labor, in business, industry and the professions.

The school buildings are in regular use by numerous organizations of the communities for night school classes in industrial arts, household arts, music, business education and recreation. Recreation programs are carried on through the school year and during the vacation months.

Besides the regular offerings of elementary and high school subjects, there is organized work for driver education, guidance, health and cooperative group work in organizations such as classes, school paper, student council, safety, athletics and music.

The school faculty is composed of men and women who are specialists in the work they are doing, highly qualified and competent. They are interested in boys and girls. They also enter various organizations and become active participants in the community.

A program completed a few years ago has given us modern buildings which are well-equipped to give the boys and girls of our school district an opportunity for experience which will fit them well to take their places in their after-school lives—loyal to their school, their parents, their country and to God.



DR. PRESTON  
BRADLEY

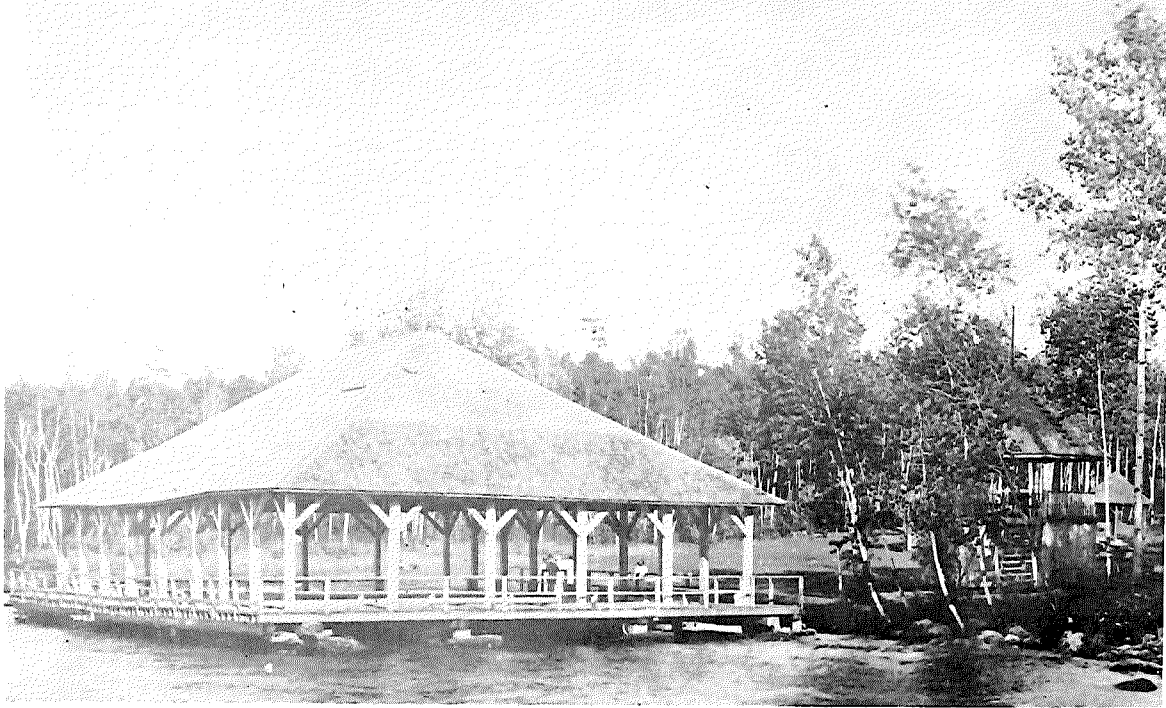
COURTESY FADIAN BACHRACH



THE OLD  
AND THE NEW



McKINLEY PARK.  
TOWER, MINN.



MEMORIES OF  
LONG AGO

Tower Lbr. Co. Saw Mill, Tower Minn.



HERMAN T. OLSON )  
HJALMER JOHNSON ) CO-CHAIRMEN

WILLIAM J. KITTO, GENERAL ADVISOR MRS. ERNEST MUSTONEN, SECRETARY  
SULO J. HOLM, TREASURER



**COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

Mrs. Glenn Bystrom, Parade  
Robert B. Olson, Parade  
Mrs. Russell Napier, Dance  
Mrs. L. E. Shafer, Decorations  
Andrew Erickson, Patriotic Program  
John Peil, Fireworks  
George Nemanich, Programs  
E. N. Kerola, School Activities  
Mrs. Russell Pearson, Display & Exh.  
Harvey Ilse, Sports  
F. J. Burgess, Publicity  
Merton Colberg, Souvenirs  
Leonard Tomsich, Beard Contest  
Mrs. Joseph Kersting, Queen Contest  
Mrs. John Dragavon, Centennial Garb  
George Bruneau, Announcer  
Russell Berg, Photographer

★

**HONORARY**

Miss Louise Kitto, Our Teacher  
Albert Bystrom, First Born  
Mrs. Albert Kitto, Oldest Citizen

★

**1884 PIONEERS**

Mrs. Anna Colberg  
Mrs. Mary Wheeler  
Mrs. Henrietta Williams  
Jack Bracco

★

**TOWER - SOUDAN ...**  
**"CRADLE OF THE IRON INDUSTRY"**

MINNESOTA STATEHOOD  
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
AUGUST 9-10 1958

★

**PROGRAM OF THE DAY**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 9**

WINDOW DISPLAYS AND ART EXHIBITS IN BUSINESS PLACES

**2 BIG BASEBALL GAMES -- 2:00 P.M.**

(TOWER ATHLETIC FIELD)

Two Inning Game -- Tower All-Stars vs. Old Timers Team

Nine Inning Game -- Tower All Stars vs. Ely All Stars

**6:00 P.M. COLORFUL GIGANTIC PARADE 6:00 P.M.**

(TOWER MAIN STREET)

**PRIZES**

	1st.	2nd.
Best Business Float .....	\$15.00	\$10.00
Best Organization Float .....	\$15.00	\$10.00
Best Individual Float .....	\$15.00	\$10.00
Best Adult Pioneer Costume .....	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
Best Historical Group .....	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
Best Individual Costume .....	\$ 5.00	\$ 3.00
Best Comical Group .....	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
Best Comical Individual .....	\$ 5.00	\$ 3.00

**AFTER PARADE -- CROWNING OF CENTENNIAL QUEEN**

(Front of T-S Vet's Club)

**CROWNING HONORS BY DR. PRESTON BRADLEY**

**AWARDING OF BEARD CONTEST PRIZES**

(Front of T-S Vet's Club)

**8:30 P.M. STREET DANCING - FUN FOR ALL 8:30 P.M.**

(NEAR BANK CORNER)

**9:00 P.M. '58'ers. BALL 9:00 P.M.**

(T-S VETS CLUB AUDITORIUM)

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 10**

Program Starts At 2 P. M. Sharp

(All Events And Program To Be Held At McKinley Park)

**MEMORIAL PROGRAM**

**SPEAKER—STAFFORD KING, STATE AUDITOR**

**ENTERTAINING AFTERNOON OF TOP NOTCH WATER SPORTS**

**THRILLING WATER SHOW EXHIBITION**

**CANOE DERBY—(AROUND BEACON LIGHT ISLAND)**

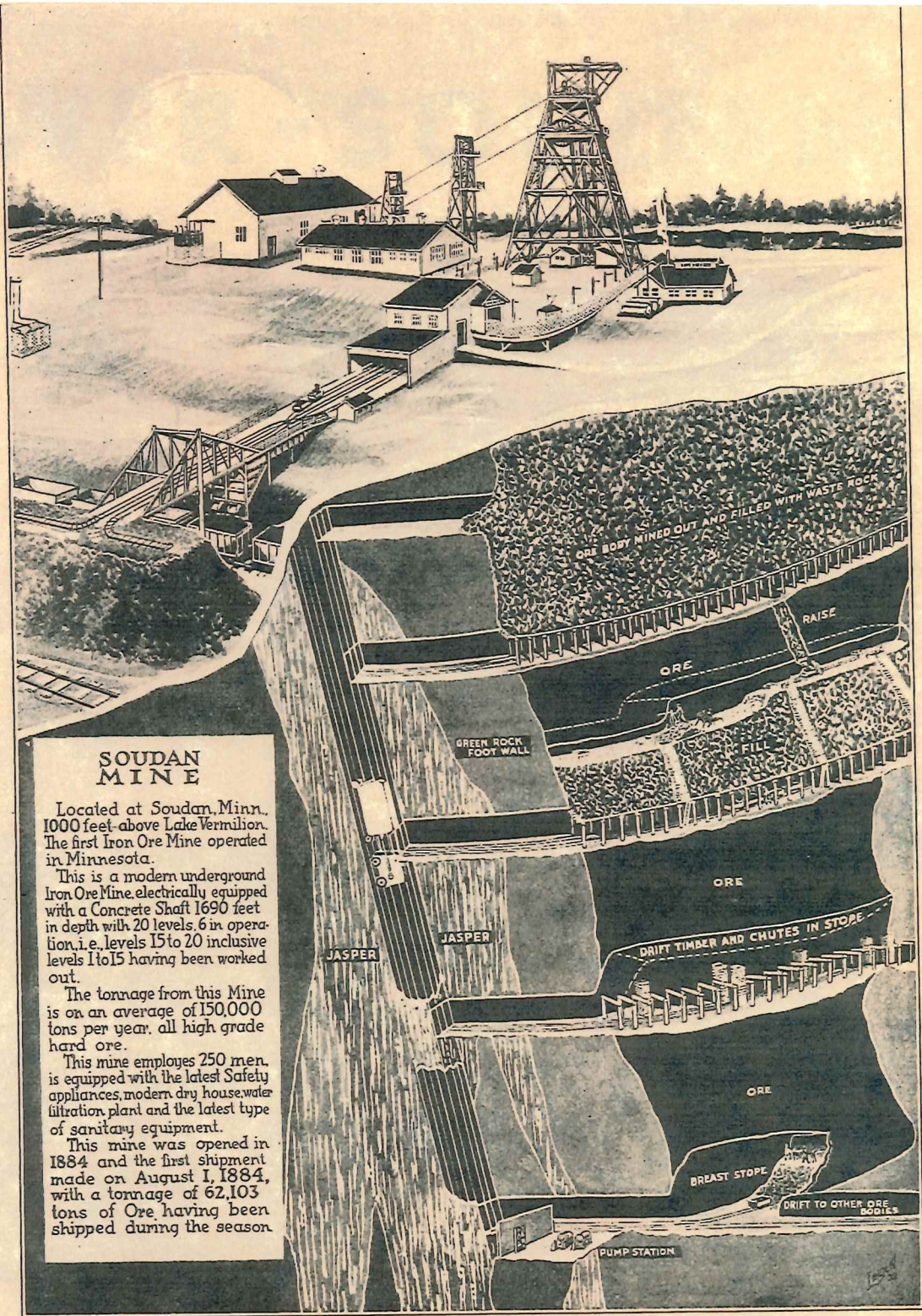
**CANOE TILTING CONTEST**

**BOAT RACES—(MANY CLASSES TO BE ANNOUNCED)**

**9:30 P.M. GIGANTIC FIREWORKS DISPLAY 9:30 P.M.**

(TOWER ATHLETIC FIELD)





### SOUDAN MINE

Located at Soudan, Minn., 1000 feet above Lake Vermilion. The first Iron Ore Mine operated in Minnesota.

This is a modern underground Iron Ore Mine, electrically equipped with a Concrete Shaft 1690 feet in depth with 20 levels, 6 in operation, i.e., levels 15 to 20 inclusive levels 1 to 15 having been worked out.

The tonnage from this Mine is on an average of 150,000 tons per year, all high grade hard ore.

This mine employs 250 men, is equipped with the latest Safety appliances, modern dry house, water filtration plant and the latest type of sanitary equipment.

This mine was opened in 1884 and the first shipment made on August 1, 1884, with a tonnage of 62,103 tons of Ore having been shipped during the season.

### SOUDAN MINE

Cross-section drawing showing how underground mining was conducted in the Vermilion Range. The Soudan Mine, opened in 1884, was the first iron ore mine in Minnesota. Its first shipment was made on August 1 of that year, and 62,103 tons of ore were dispatched during the first season of operation. — DM&IR COLLECTION