

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Minnesota
COUNTY:	Koochiching
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	APR 16 1975

1. NAME

COMMON: Little American Mine

AND/OR HISTORIC: Little American Mine

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: *W of Island View on*
Little American Island

CITY OR TOWN: Island View *vic.* CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Eighth

STATE: Minnesota CODE: 22 COUNTY: Koochiching CODE: 071

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>private property</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Nancy Scholz

STREET AND NUMBER: 1204 Dellis Road

CITY OR TOWN: Wheaton STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Registrar of Deeds - Koochiching County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: International Falls STATE: Minnesota CODE: 22

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Statewide Historic Sites Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: continuous Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Minnesota Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER: Building 27, Fort Snelling

CITY OR TOWN: St. Paul STATE: Minnesota CODE: 22

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

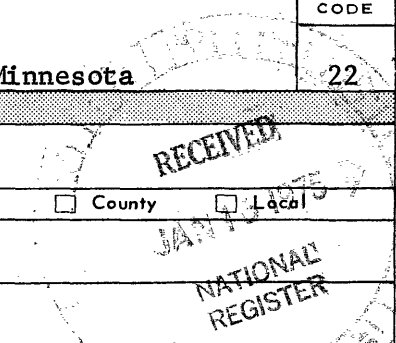
STATE: Minnesota

COUNTY: Koochiching

ENTRY NUMBER: APR 16 1975

DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY



7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Little American Mine is located on a three acre island in Rainy Lake approximately eleven miles east of International Falls, Minnesota. The island is overgrown with brush, jack pine and poplar and appears to be used most commonly by occasional campers and picnickers. The site is accessible by boat with the best landing area on the south shore at a spoil dump remaining from the mining operations.

Remains of the mine consist of several shafts and scattered fragments of mine machinery. Two major excavations are visible; a vertical, cribbed shaft and a horizontal adit. The adit is partially filled with water which prevented the recording of measurements during the field visit. The vertical shaft, which measures 7 by 11 feet, is filled with debris to about 15 feet from its top. Other excavations are visible but appear to be open pit and not of any great depth. A reconnaissance of the island failed to discover any building remains.

Mining operations began at the Little American late in 1893 following the discovery of gold on the western side of the island by a prospector. He could not obtain financial backing to mine the ore and sold the property to a group of Duluth businessmen. This company began operation in January, 1894 with a small crew opening an adit along the original strike. A stamp mill, to extract the gold from the quartz, was built at Rainy Lake City about one mile east of the mine. By July of that year the mill was processing ore valued at \$30 per ton.

Because the initial operation proved promising the company opened a vertical shaft to the 45 foot level from which drifts were extended to mine the exposed ore. This expansion resulted in the construction of a bunkhouse, shafthouse, headquarters building and several other smaller structures on the island. Loading facilities were also built along the south shore to speed transport of gold bearing rock to the stamp mill. Even though the ore assayed at \$30 a ton and more the mine was closed due to improper administration.

Shortly after its closing a lawsuit between partners resulted in stoppage of all developments at the mine until late in 1895. Work began again under new management but the ore was of lower quality than anticipated and operations closed in December. The mine was opened again in 1896 operating sporadically throughout that year. By the end of 1897 a small but steady profit was being produced and the Little American appeared ready to prove its worth to investors. A short halt at Christmas resulted in permanent closure however and equipment was transferred to other mines nearby.

Two further attempts were made to reopen the Little American; once in 1901 and again in the 1920s. Neither of these attempts was successful and the shafts eventually filled with water. It was noted during the latter attempt that machinery was still in place on the lower levels of the mine and did not appear to have been badly damaged by water.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

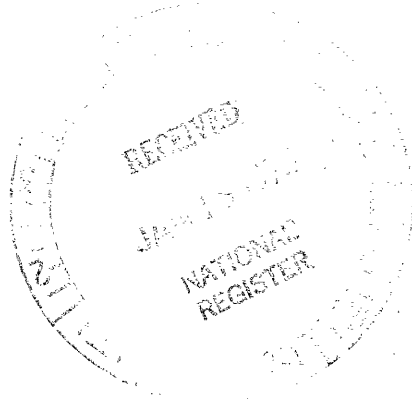
- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <u>Mining</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Little American Mine is the only gold mine in Minnesota known to have produced a profit during its period of operation. The mine's discovery resulted in the 1894 gold rush and was a factor in the rapid settlement of the Rainy Lake region during that period. The impact of the Little American was felt primarily in the town of Rainy Lake City which had sprung up near the mine.

The Little American operated during the period 1893-1898 producing ore that assayed from 18-300 dollars a ton. The average value was just over \$30 per ton which represented a profit of about \$12 a ton. The operators were not experienced miners however and the profits were wiped out through speculative investments and bad mining techniques. Several companies attempted to mine the location and even though the ore was productive a rich vein never was found and the mine subsequently shut down.

A direct result of the mine closure was the abandonment of Rainy Lake City. This town slowly disappeared between 1898 and 1901 due to the failure of the mine. Some buildings were moved twelve miles west to the new town of Koochiching (International Falls) while others fell into disrepair. The mine and town both demonstrate little indication that human occupation was ever very extensive. Even though the Little American never lived up to its believed potential its impact was felt in the region through the settlers who came to mine and remained to exploit the other resources available. The Little American's greatest influence in the mining industry occurred further north, in Canada, where the major gold fields were found to exist.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Harriman, M.A., "A Trip to the Minnesota and Ontario Gold Fields" in The Northwest Magazine, July 1897, pp. 24-28.
 International Joint Commission, Final Report of the International Joint Commission on the Lake of the Woods Reference, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1917
Rainy Lake Herald, December 2, 1897, Newspaper Dept., Minnesota Historical Society
Rainy Lake Journal, June 28, July 26, August 9, October 25, 1894; April 4, October 3, 1895; December 16, 1896; February 18, 1897, Newspaper Dept., Minnesota Historical Society
 Winchell, N.H., The Geological and Natural History Survey of Minnesota, 23rd Annual Report, Harrison and Smith, State Printers, Minneapolis, 1895.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

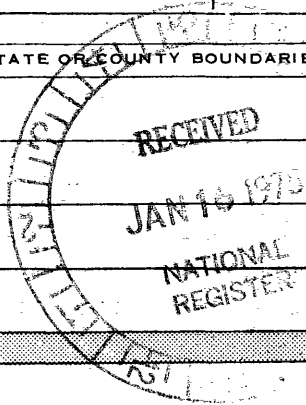
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' ' "	0 ' ' "		48 ° 36 ' 09 "	93 ° 10 ' 05 "	
NE	0 ' ' "	0 ' ' "				
SE	0 ' ' "	0 ' ' "				
SW	0 ' ' "	0 ' ' "				

15/48761b
5383 050
CO

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **3 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Douglas George, Survey Archaeologist

ORGANIZATION: **Minnesota Historical Society** DATE: **12/18/74**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Building 27, Fort Snelling

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Paul,** STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **22**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Russell W. Fridley
Russell W. Fridley

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 12/30/74

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

A. R. Moore
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

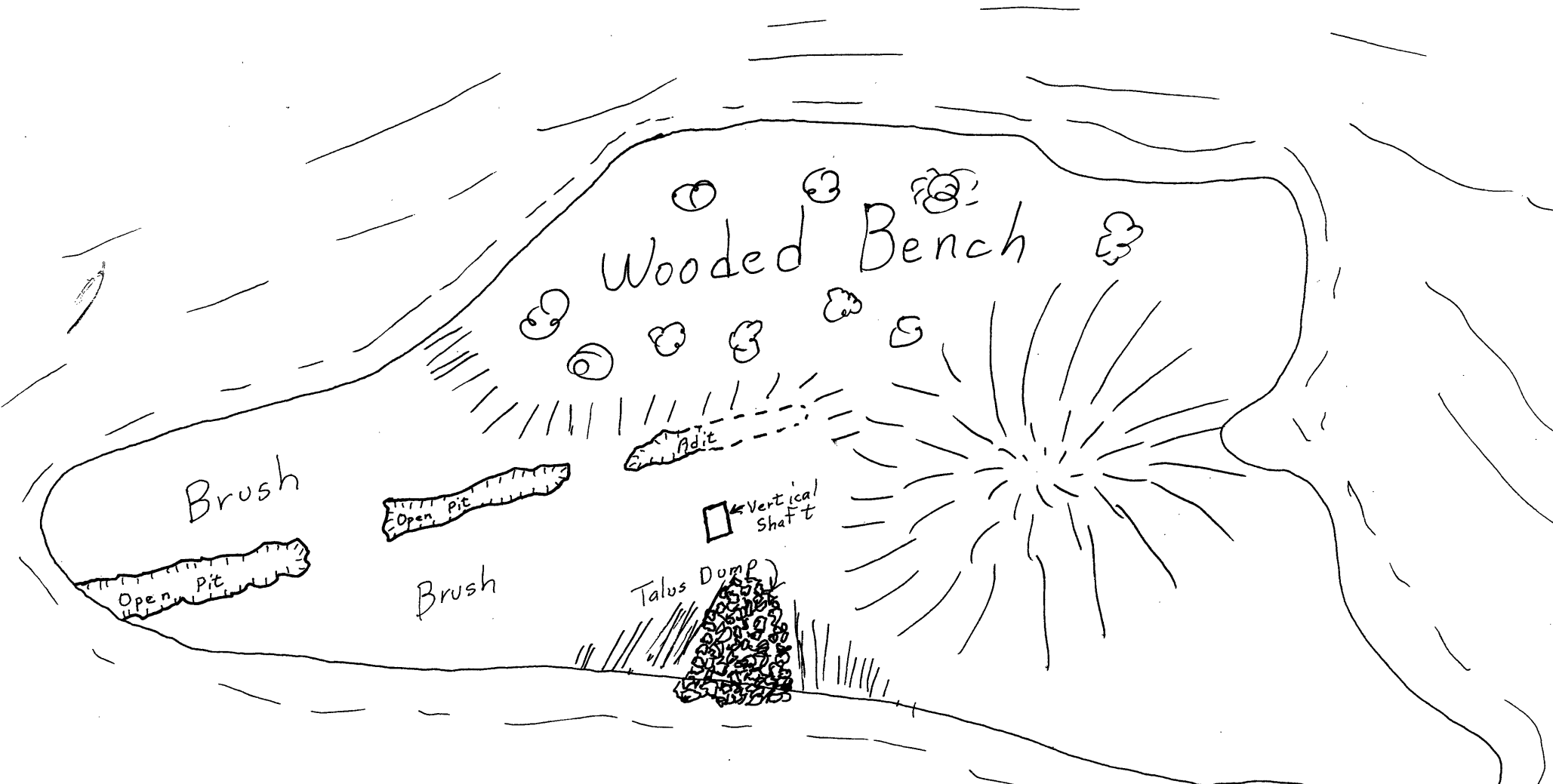
Date 4/16/75

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date APR 8 1975

Little American Mine



Rainy Lake

Approx 45 FT.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

for Keeper Helene Lyman
1/19/89

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

**Note: These changes apply to
Little America Mine in Koochiching
County, Minnesota.**

REFERENCE NUMBER: 75000226

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Koochiching

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Little American Mine

CITY:

VICINITY OF: Island View

ADDRESS: off Mn. Hwy. 11 in Voyageurs National Park

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

Nina M. Archabal
Nina M. Archabal
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988
Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Little American Mine

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MINNESOTA, Koochiching

DATE RECEIVED: 6/19/06 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/02/06
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 75000226

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Accepted

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Elson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 8.2.06

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Little American Mine

Name of property

Koochiching County, MN

County and State

Section 2 Page 1

Reference Number: 75000226

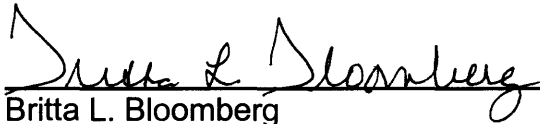
State: Minnesota (MN)

County: Koochiching (071)

Resource Name (Historic): Little American Mine

Location, Street & Number: on Little American Island in Rainy Lake in Voyageurs National Park and Unorganized Territory

Comments: Island View disbanded as a city



Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

6/14/06
Date