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AN EXAMINATION OF THE SOCIO-CULTURAL ROLES OF
BOARDINGHOUSES AND THE BOARDING EXPERIENCE ON THE
MICHIGAN MINING FRONTIER, 1840-1930

By

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ABSTRACT

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Donald Hardesty (1980, 1985, 1988), Kenneth Lewis (1980, 1984) and
Jerome Steffen (1980) have identified the mining regions in the eastern states and
the American West as cosmopolitan frontiers, a frontier type distinct from the
classic agrarian model. Between 1840 and the 1920s, the western half of
Michigan's Upper Peninsula was also a developing cosmopolitan mining fron-
tier. Wilderness areas rich with copper or iron drew rapid and exploitive (and
therefore often short-lived) settlement, provided necessary transportation, tech-
nology, and labor were available. Strong links to extra-regional financial and
cultural centers tended to produce primarily modal changes, i.e., adaptations
necessary for successful mining or day-to-day survival; other cultural patterns
resisted change. Variable markets and resource availability created boom-bust
economy. These plus additional push-pull factors produced unstable, even errat-
ic, man-land distribution. Lewis emphasizes dominant corporate policy in the
cosmopolitan context; Hardesty sees household as the basic "colonizing unit."
Housing, particularly that provided by or strongly influenced by corporate poli-
cy, is therefore significant to understanding the mining frontier. Companies built
boardinghouses and family homes that accommodated boarders. Through them
companies manipulated community growth and employees' lives. The height of
Michigan's mining industry coincided with the national boardinghouse era.

Commercial boardinghouses and boarding in private homes also became prevalent. The institution of boarding is used in this study as a cultural lens through which frontier settlement and development, corporate manipulation, immigration, domestic production, and ethnic identity and networking may be examined. Understanding the physical boardinghouse within its cultural landscape has been guided by material culture studies, especially E. McClung Fleming's model (1982) of artifact study that suggests methods of determining meaning as well as description. Architecturally, many boardinghouses emphasized American middle-class ideologies concerning privacy and family, but actual living patterns did not always conform to the architecture. Boarding households often involved extended kin and operated as surrogate families for those unrelated, and as cosmopolitan frontier theory predicts, ethnicity remained strong. Boarding on the Michigan mining frontier resembled the experience elsewhere; significant exceptions are linked to the unique nature of the frontier itself.

For Ron, who always believed
and taught me to do the same

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER 6

CHAPTER 7

CHAPTER 8

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

Recently a number of defunct or endangered institutions of the American built environment have come under scrutiny, prompted apparently by combined scholarly interest and nostalgia. Among the objects of these studies are small-town America's main streets (Francavigla 1996, Read-Miller and Doherty 1988), the diner (Gutman and Kaufman 1979), the general store (Roberts and Jones 1991), and the movie theatre (Valentine 1994). Moreover, although the automobile is very much still with us, its impact over the past century on courtship, fashion, travel accommodation, entertainment, and even home design continues to generate much study (Lewis and Goldstein 1983). Drive-in's, both restaurants and movies, are among those once-prolific auto-generated institutions now nearly gone.

Both the growth and the demise of these institutions say something about the society within which they once proliferated. Whatever the institution, it grew from a felt need, served a portion of the society, and then under pressure of changed circumstance, it vanished or metamorphosed to serve a new need.

Studying these institutions, therefore, offers an opportunity to understand the society they served, the priorities they reflected, and the changes within the society that led to their end. As tangible evidence in the built environment, these institutions also reflect their society through their physical characteristics, intrinsic technology, or a more ephemeral quality such as "style." The individual responses of people directly associated with the institution reveal types and degrees of meaning the institution had for them, perhaps unplanned or even

unsuspected by the society at large. The changes over time reflected in and caused by the institution add further dimension to their study.

Another of those institutions that manifested itself as both a social and tangible presence in American society is the boardinghouse. As both a living arrangement and a form of dwelling, the boardinghouse has a long and multi-faceted history. A legacy from Europe, it became part of the American society from colonial times and served every stratum of American society until it phased out around the time of the Depression. Ubiquitous particularly during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, boardinghouses pervaded not only the landscape, but the personal lives of Americans and our popular culture, especial-ly popular literature. Although varied in form, purpose, and clientele, their numbers, popularity, wide distribution, and longevity establish boardinghouses and the concomitant phenomenon of boarding as an institution with the capacity to reveal significant cultural information about the societies in which they existed.

Scholarly studies of American boardinghouses emphasize two particular venues—the posh urban boardinghouses of New Orleans, San Francisco, and East Coast cities, and the urban factory boardinghouses, particularly in Lowell, Massachusetts, and early twentieth-century industrial towns. Another popular context for boardinghouses, but one that has received little scholarly attention, was the midwestern copper and iron mining region of Michigan's western Upper Peninsula. Here, between the 1840s and the 1920s, thousands of people, many of them lone male immigrants, came to find work in the mines and collat-eral endeavors. This flood of humanity needed housing, and boardinghouses became a standard and reliable answer to the need, as they did elsewhere across the country during the same period.

Research Questions

The lack of generally available information about the boardinghouses of the Upper Peninsula (U.P.)—when and where they were built, what they looked like, how many people lived in them, etc.—might be sufficient justification to research them and to compile these data. More compelling is the opportunity to examine not just the houses, but through them the society that built them, lived in them, and then phased them out. Superficially, all boardinghouses served the same purpose, to feed and shelter their residents, but like the one-size-fits-all garment, prevailing conditions of the wearer produce widely varying results in the wearing. From place to place boardinghouses adapted to the local situation, and in that adaptation reflected the society that generated them.

In the case of Michigan's U.P. mining region, that society was of a distinct and peculiar type: it was a frontier society—more specifically, an extractive industrial frontier. As such, it was essentially a temporary society, dominated by the mining companies but dependent upon the natural resources at its base and the feasibility of exploiting those resources. Mining settlements too had a temporary quality about them. Not only would residents come or go according to the economic ebb and flow, but at a mining company's behest entire buildings, even whole settlements, could be dismantled and reassembled elsewhere, or relocated intact on other company land. Clearly this was a boarding venue markedly different from fashionable nineteenth-century Philadelphia or Boston.

The boardinghouses and the institution of boarding had to serve thousands of residents, many of them immigrants, in this dynamic mining frontier society, but not only the residents had an interest in this institution. Housing is itself a central concern to most human society. Boarding introduces additional dimensions of economics—the household as a business and women operating a domestic business—plus added complexity in the relationships between

members of the household. When, as in the Michigan frontier, a definite link exists between the institution of boarding, the companies representing the central industry, and its employees/boarders, another whole set of dynamics is engendered.

During the period of greatest mining activity in upper Michigan, boardinghouses and the boarding process flourished, suggesting that the institution popular in urban America had adapted appropriately to serve the frontier society. How it provided that service, and what the institution became in the process, is the central question of this study. What roles did boarding and the boardinghouses fill in the mining frontier of Michigan between 1840 and the 1920s?

Specifically, how prevalent was boarding? Who built the facilities, companies or individuals? How were they distributed spatially and temporally within the developing frontier? Did they serve any other function besides housing? Questions regarding the physical houses considered their architectural style(s), sizes and materials, technological facilities, internal arrangement, and ultimate disposition.

Who operated the boardinghouses; who set and enforced the rules? Who resided in the houses, why, for how long, and how did they view the experience? How were ethnic and family identities expressed in and through boarding in the U.P.? What differences in the Michigan experience may be tied to the frontier venue, and what are their significance?

Concomitant questions led to comparisons to other frontier societies, such as the mining regions of the American West, and to Eastern industrial boardinghouses and company towns. They also sought to place the frontier boardinghouse into a developmental context, examining the changing forms and purposes of American boardinghouses through time to the point where they became obsolete.

Research Strategies

Answering these questions required considerable creative investigation, since the evidence of boardinghouses in Michigan's U.P. is scattered, fragmentary, and in a myriad of forms. The first step was to locate sources of information. Initial library searches pointed in two general directions: 1) popular expressions of boardinghouse culture in America and 2) scholarly work on boarding structures and the institution in various nations. Popular literature and history showed how extensively the boardinghouse as place and social institution had permeated American society. Preliminary investigation identified scholarship on company towns, boardinghouse studies on Lowell specifically and the institution in general, but only one short article on a single U.P. Michigan boardinghouse. Readings in history and geography of the U.P. provided temporal and physical context for the search. Federal and state census schedules identified boarding residences in specific years and Michigan locales, the names of householders and boarders, their ages, marital status, occupations, and ethnicity. Annual state mining reports provided additional statistics.

Meanwhile, the physical and personal links to actual boardinghouses in the target region had still to be discovered. One member of the project guidance committee arranged an informant interview. Copies of a flyer requesting leads to informants or documentary information and a letter explaining the project were sent to every historical society, oral history organization, and genealogical group in the state. Responses identified numerous boardinghouse sites, former residents, and documentary resources, and often included offers of personal introduction to local informants or guided tours of significant sites.

These leads opened the next phase of the research: on-site investigation. Personal referrals were followed up, resulting in site tours, access to photos and other privately-held documents and interviews. Ultimately fourteen informants

were taped specifically for this project and over one hundred additional oral history tapes and transcripts were consulted. Local archives and libraries held town directories, historic maps, historic building surveys, company records, pioneer diaries, photos, news accounts of local boardinghouses, and family histories of those identified as boardinghouse keepers. Town libraries and used book stores yielded anniversary publications containing reproduced documents and pioneer memoirs detailing the founding and early growth of mining communities, including specifics on boarding accommodations, their residents, and operators. Museum book shops were a source for limited-distribution local histories.

Field work also afforded opportunities for personal contact with professional scholars of the U.P. including those supervising historic sites through the Michigan Bureau of History, professors of history and archaeology at the universities in the area, and others attending and speaking at the annual Upper Peninsula History Conference, the sesquicentennial celebration of the Michigan iron industry (Marquette, 1994) and at FinnFest '96 (Marquette). They shared their work and resources, adding to the data base of this project.

Despite methodical work plans and field itineraries, some discoveries were serendipitous. Reference to an oral history project among the U.P. Italian community led to a wealth of information already taped, to additional informants, and to a tremendously helpful professional contact. Discovery of a Boardinghouse Road on a modern map inspired an informative detour from an afternoon's planned route. One regional scholar, encountered by chance in a university archive, offered guidance to an obscure source he had used in his third book on the area, then in press. Such interest and generosity from many local folks led to numerous valuable bits of information, such as the gift of a file of original mining company documents at a Quincy Hill garage sale.

Theoretical Bases

Theoretical support for this study comes from several avenues of scholarship. Particularly important are the concepts of industrial frontiers developed by historical archaeologists Jerome Steffen (1980), Kenneth Lewis (1980, 1984), and Donald Hardesty (1980, 1985, 1988). Their identification of the vulnerable nature of an extractive frontier dependent upon transportation and outside markets, upon adequate but flexible labor supply, and on unpredictable resources provide a clear model against which the Michigan mining settlements may be matched and understood. Steffen's (1980) argument regarding the nature of change on such a frontier and Hardesty's refinement of that argument (1980, 1985) make clear both various company policies (including the universal adoption of boardinghouses for employees) and the reactions of the many ethnic groups to their new situation.

Analyzing and understanding the physical entity of the boardinghouses produced special challenges, particularly since so few still stand. Boardinghouses themselves exhibited wide variation in the physical context, and therefore no single example may be considered totally representative. Moreover, this project hoped to learn more from the physical boardinghouses than simply their construction details. The scholarly discipline of material culture provided a research model useful for looking beyond the mere physical entity of a building in a search for meaning, and at the same time was flexible enough to allow for the bits and pieces of evidence available. This model, designed by E. McClung Fleming (1982), lies at the heart of the physical analysis presented below.

Whereas Fleming's model suggests ways to extract meaning from an object, the personal stories of those who had lived the boardinghouse experience made meanings explicit. Several articles discussing family experiences in boardinghouses other than in Michigan were helpful points of reinforcement or com-

parison to the primary Michigan materials and simultaneously linked the board-
inghouse experience to notions of surrogate and fictive family.

The result to this project was to continually seek wider implications of
facts, and to periodically "change the focus" of scale. Thus, for example, the con-
sideration of boardinghouse landladies as employers of local young women
enlarged to considerations of their role in stimulating female immigration and its
consequences.

Organization of the Discussion

In its presentation, this study follows an outside-in progression. After
laying some historical and theoretical groundwork on the institution of boarding
and the nature of a mining frontier, it demonstrates how Michigan's mining
region fits the pattern. Demographics of the population and need for housing is
shown. With that established, the mining companies are introduced as commu-
nity builders, both a major source of the boardinghouses as physical venue and a
primary instigator of boarding becoming as institution in the region. A develop-
ing interconnection between company policy and boarding is a central issue in
this section.

Next, boarding in private homes and in commercial establishments that
were separate from mining company control is examined, noting particularly at
this point the economic niche filled by the women who operated and worked in
boardinghouses and the implications their economic contributions had on the
society at large.

Also here is a section devoted to the co-operative *poika talo* ("bachelors'
house") developed by the Finns in the Great Lakes region. Ethnicity was a dom-
inant feature of the largely-immigrant population served by the boardinghouses,
and relevant discussions of prejudice, segregation, and unique ethnic

contribution appear at appropriate junctures throughout the study.

After examining the surrounding social issues of the boardinghouse, the next section moves into the physical structures themselves to examine them as material culture, part of a cultural landscape, and shows how and of what they were built, what facilities and comforts they included, what ideologies they promoted, and how issues of privacy and status seem to have been accommodated by their design. Time, place, available technology, and personal choice each affected individual houses and what they offered. Time and circumstance also played significantly in the fate of these buildings once they no longer served boarders. How and to what degree they still function on the cultural landscape is noted in an epilogue.

Before that epilogue, however, the focus moves to the people in the boardinghouses. Resident manager families and the men who boarded give personal evidence as to what their boardinghouse lives meant to them. Daily functions of the household, from chores and recipes to entertainment, special occasions, and occasional tragedy and violence are related to the boarding household. Relationships, activities, and reminiscences suggest the degree that various residents understood their living place as "house" or "home."

This study of the boardinghouse on the Michigan mining frontier proposes to expand the literature on this form of housing so endemic to American society from colonial days to the Depression and at the same time to use it as a lens through which to examine from an untried angle an American industrial frontier that rivaled the fabled California gold fields. Before proceeding with the actual consideration of the boardinghouses, however, it is necessary to lay some theoretical groundwork and to provide a bit of historical context.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL BASES

Although several studies center on development of the mining frontier of northern Michigan, and a few mention boarding or boardinghouses there, none focuses precisely on the considerations of this study. Therefore, a theoretical synthesis had to be made to guide it. The first order of business was to come to an understanding of "frontier" generally and industrial frontiers (mining) specifically, and then to define the western half of Michigan's Upper Peninsula in that regard. Frontier studies provide that base. Material culture studies, particularly relating to dwellings and vernacular architecture as cultural barometer and venue, supply additional guidance.

Concepts of Frontier

It is just possible that more people have attempted to define "frontier" than were needed to develop one. Certainly the defining has taken more time.

American frontier studies began more than a century ago with the "frontier thesis" of Frederick Jackson Turner, a highly impressionistic address delivered in July, 1893, to the American Historical Association in which Jackson rhapsodized the frontier experience as the source and stimulus for American national character. For Turner, the frontier was place ("the meeting point between savagery and civilization"), but more importantly a process with successive "stages of frontier advance" launched by excess or restive population passing through the "gate of escape" into vast tracts of free land.

10

The idea of frontier is not uniquely American, however, nor is the colonization experience. Thus, although it was Turner's purpose to attribute the "American character" and its democratic institutions to the frontier experience of the American West, subsequent geographers, economists, historians, and social scientists have sought a less parochial definition, considering the notion of frontiers in other parts of the world and from varying perspectives.

Comparative frontier studies have identified and examined frontiers from North, South, and Latin Americas to Australia, Japan, and Russia, producing numerous models of frontier development and definitions of frontier as line or boundary, region, region between lines, habitat, and process (Casagrande, Thompson, and Young 1964, Wells 1973, Savage and Thompson 1979, Margolis 1977, Katzman 1975, Steffen 1980, Lewis 1980, 1984, McGovern 1985, Hardesty 1980, 1985, 1988).

Discussing frontiers as part of global systems began with Walter Prescott Webb's *The Great Frontier* (1952), arguing that fifteenth-century explorers touched off a four-century frontier phenomenon by expanding European influence into the western hemisphere and beyond. Of several geographic perspectives, one differentiates between settlement and political frontiers (Prescott 1965), another between inclusive and exclusive frontiers relative to the aboriginal inhabitants (Mikesell 1960 in Savage and Thompson 1979). A significant economic argument develops a core/semi-periphery/periphery model of world economic empires, capitalism being the mechanism for frontier development through resource exploitation (Wallerstein 1974).

Ultimately, increasing emphasis focused on ecological models of frontier development, both as habitat—the environment and resources—and as biological analogy—frontier colonies as "cultural species" (Hardesty 1980, 1985).

A useful and influential early comparative study (Casagrande,

Thompson, and Young 1964) emphasizes an adaptive, processual notion of colonization linked to a biological metaphor. Important to this view of the frontier is the "Colonization Gradient." This dendritic system considers economic activity, man-land density, and relative positioning to the metropolitan area and transportation linkages to establish a hierarchy of colonial settlement types. It is the spatial arrangement of this "distinctive settlement pattern" that defines the frontier.

The gradient concept grows from the fluid nature of frontier development, where change is rapid but sporadic, and boundaries (social and economic as well as political) can change abruptly and unevenly. Such "fits and starts" of growth and change resemble the biological concept known as punctuated equilibrium, which argues that organisms remain unchanged for relatively long periods, then display sudden evolutionary change and hold that configuration for a considerable period before the next significant modification (Gould 1981).

Elements of the gradient are the *entrepot*, the major urban link within the metropolitan area to the colonial area; the *frontier town*, central distribution point and major social, economic, and political center within the colonial area as well as link between the entrepot and the rest of the colonial area; the *nucleated settlement*, social center for residents perhaps with school and church but few stores and simple political structure; the *semi-nucleated settlement*, "characterized more by its lack of integration and community facilities than by their presence"; and *dispersed settlement*, widely scattered individual homes. Even without a defined system of stages, the processual model is still clear.

It is not deterministic, however, for although any less-complex settlement, in response to surrounding conditions, might develop into the next complex stage, there is no necessity for it to do so: in fact, just as an organism no longer

able to function or adapt dies out, a settlement no longer serving a purpose could become a ghost town.

Further expanding the processual concept of frontier colonialism, D. W. Meinig (1986: 65-76) considers systematic geographic and social changes on both sides of the Atlantic during the first 150 years of European colonization in America, noting the uneven though two-way flow of people, goods and information over the sequence of colonial development.

The sequence begins with exploration of the frontier territory, moves to extractive activity including outposts for collection, extends political control, and then sends settlers to establish a "self-perpetuating nucleus" of European imperialism. Like Webb (1952), Meinig (1986) ends where Turner refuses to begin, i,e., in showing America's first colonies as frontier territory relative to Europe. Reminiscent of Casagrande, Thompson, and Young (1964), he demonstrates a process leading to initial colonization, making it clear that colonies do not pop up like mushrooms and only then develop. Thus taken as a global phenomenon, colonization spins the dendritic system of the Gradient into a web not only interlinking frontier communities with their specific parent nations, but linking the colonially-affected parent nations and their colonies into a world system.

Conditions Affecting a Frontier

In the eight decades following Turner's thesis, notions of frontiers developed considerable complexity. Key variables associated with frontier differentiation had come to include transportation, technology, population, environment, colonial "product," economics, political action, and social relations.

Transportation seems to be an almost universal consideration to frontier or colonial studies, but it cannot be considered in isolation. Certainly people and/or goods must be transported to and from the site of colonization, so the

location has to be accessible. The necessity of transportation and its extent is, however, relative to the nature of the frontier as well. If, for example, the primary aim is simply to move settlers and their belongings from an entrepot to a frontier town or beyond, a simple road or trail for walking or perhaps handcarts might suffice. If the colonial product is not particularly perishable and is easy to transport, then that same road or trail might do for bringing the product to market.

If it should be perishable (so speed is imperative) or if it is awkward or heavy, or if to engage in the colonial enterprise much heavy equipment has to be transported to the hinterlands in addition to bringing out a heavy or awkward product (such as with mining), then the cost (in time, people, materials, effort) of the necessary transportation system might actually close a region to frontier development until such time as the value of the product justifies the expenditure of the transport system, or technological changes make transport easier and/or cheaper.

Technology impacts in additional ways besides through transportation. It can, in effect, compensate for any number of shortcomings in the other variables. For instance, the Cornish pump stimulated development of numerous deep shaft mining operations throughout the world otherwise inaccessible due to water accumulation. Poor soil or climactic conditions may be overcome by fertilizers or hybridization that produces plants that will mature in a shorter growing season. The costs of such technology relative to the income from the product must also be considered, however, to determine if frontier expansion under these conditions will satisfy the colonists' aims.

Population issues are equally as varied. The number, age, gender, skills, and willingness or freedom of people to develop a frontier, in the proper mix, can potentially compensate for numerous unfavorable conditions, but in the

improper mix may not be able to capitalize on an otherwise favorable situation. For instance, many willing but unskilled hands, lacking knowledgeable leadership, might not be able to make use of available technology necessary to their survival.

Governmental and social policies are also important variables behind the types of frontier endeavors, both in launching colonization and sometimes in impeding it. Policies regarding emigration or immigration are but one of numerous possible examples.

Industrial Frontiers

As frontier studies matured, additional approaches developed. Exploring them would eventually lead to theory specifically designed to understand mining frontiers, including those in Michigan.

Responding to the emphasis on change in numerous frontier studies, Jerome Steffen (1980) took another look at the Turner thesis and its respondents, further considering linkages but not spatial links per se. The number, type, duration, and effect of those links are the keys to his frontier classification. He argues for two basic types of frontiers: the insular, in which the frontier culture lacks significant linkages to the parent culture and hence is isolated from it, causing it to produce fundamental changes in its structure from the parent; and the cosmopolitan, where linkages are sufficient to maintain the parent culture in the frontier, although producing such modal changes as become necessary in the particular circumstance. Even where physical linkages are weak, if the frontier exposure is short-lived and memory maintains linkage, Steffen argues for the cosmopolitan rather than insular category. Moreover, he opens up the spatial context of the American frontier to include the continental U.S., and argues with

Prescott (1965), Meinig (1986), and others that America was "an insular frontier of Europe" (1980: xiii).

He then examines Turner's four frontier types (fur trading, ranching, mining, and farming) against his own scheme and concludes that only the eastern agricultural frontier was truly insular, i.e., produced the fundamental changes so heartily expounded by Turner. Trading, ranching, and mining were short-lived enterprises tied so closely to national and international factors that they could not become insular and, therefore, they produced only modal changes compared to trading, ranching, and mining elsewhere.

Subsequent scholars have used Steffen's insular and cosmopolitan categories for the basis of more detailed examinations within each category. Kenneth Lewis (1984), for example, synthesizes arguments from several earlier writers to construct an insular frontier model. Drawing on Meinig (1986), Lewis shows how a permanent agricultural colony is established that works to develop stability and self-identity.

Lewis, however, also draws upon Wallerstein (1974) and Casagrande, Thompson, and Young (1964), arguing that pattern of development, insular or cosmopolitan, will be determined by the dendritic transportation system linking settlements, entrepot, and permanent state and will also respond to the "physical and cultural landscape" and available technology. Employing Wallerstein's economic concepts, Lewis maintains that expansion occurs in response to demand for the frontier's products, and eventually site placements may shift to more even distribution as competition for resources between settlements increases.

The implications for extractive cosmopolitan (industrial) frontiers, where resources may be quickly depleted and population shifts often dramatic, include transitory settlements and high dependence on management, investment capital, and technology from the core. Lewis links population disbursement to activities

and describes three basic categories of settlement type: 1) camps, sites dedicated to extracting and processing the resource(s) at the economic heart of the frontier enterprise; 2) entrepots, major re-distribution sites bridging periphery to core; and 3) occasional intermediate supply sites.

Further refining the industrial frontier concept, Donald Hardesty (1980, 1985, 1988) focuses on the mining frontier of the American West. His conclusions regarding the nature of the mining frontier, like those of Steffen (1980) and Lewis (1984), also apply to the mining region of Michigan. In his conception of mining development, punctuated equilibrium is particularly appropriate, since in this type of frontier, change is sudden and sporadic but standardization is crucial and there is little room or tolerance for variation or diversity under the pressure of high-stakes extractive ventures. Thus one new technique or flash of inspiration—if successful—could spawn a new "cultural species" almost overnight (Hardesty 1980).

At first glance, this argument might seem to contradict Steffen's basic notion of the cosmopolitan frontier. The issue, however, is the nature of the change and its source. An innovation or invention that improves or increases the frontier product (and consequently its profitability) would be implemented rapidly and universally throughout the entire region. This change, however, arises externally and the change itself would be only superficial or modal and directed to the frontier's economic context. It would represent part of what Hardesty (1985: 225) calls "imported environments." Such a change would not tend to homogenize the industrial frontier society.

This point is important when considering the social and cultural behavior of the diverse populations on the Michigan mining frontier, particularly in relation to the immigrant ethnics and housing. According to Hardesty, instead of

producing an homogenized Americanism (Turner 1893), industrial frontier society heightened cultural diversity.

> [A]s frontiers are colonized and fill up, the competition for . . . limited resources . . . intensifies. And with intensified competition, the conditions are optimal for the *proliferation* of ethnic groups and other distinct cultural traditions. Ethnic boundaries are solidified, not broken down, and cultural patterns become more heterogeneous, not the reverse. (Hardesty 1980: 73)

Hardesty demonstrates this point with an example of nineteenth-century Chinese immigrant laborers in eastern California. As sojourners, workers who anticipated returning to their homeland, they had little motivation to adopt Western ways. Examination of their behavior reveals that

> traditional values and lifestyles were retained as much as possible; no attempt was made to learn the foreign language; . . . geographically localized racial/cultural settlements were formed to duplicate traditional ways and to minimize social interaction with Westerners as much as possible; and strong ethnocentric sentiments about the superiority of the homeland were expressed. (Hardesty 1985: 222)

It seems the men's major concession to Western material culture was using tools supplied by employers and necessary household goods where no home varieties were available: in other words, only where absolutely necessary.

Additionally, Hardesty (1980: 70-71) identifies the household as the critical focus for understanding the industrial frontier. Viewed as process, the household is a collection of individuals adapting to rules and strategies. As social entity it is the "colonizing unit," an identifiable component of even the most dispersed periphery; physically, "a visible assemblage of persons sharing a common life space in a specified manner." As material culture, it is structure reflecting ideology and social process.

Frontier theory provides valuable concepts on which to base this boardinghouse project. Among Steffen's (1980) arguments defining the cosmopolitan frontier, he emphasizes the similarity of mining frontiers "regardless of time and

place," thus linking by implication the Michigan mining region to the American West (and Hardesty's discussions), the Appalachian region, and others. Additionally, this argument links the two major Michigan mining industries, copper and iron.

Lewis (1984) is useful in two respects to studies of Michigan industrial frontiers (see, e.g., Langhorne 1988). First, he offers a spatial pattern of frontier settlement simplified from the Colonization Gradient but incorporating its inherent hierarchy. Each of his three settlement types are potential sites for boardinghouses. Second, Lewis' focus on the capitalistic dynamic for frontier development emphasizes the central role corporate policy should be expected to have played on the Michigan mining frontier, right down to the level of housing.

Hardesty (1980, 1985, 1988) provides a valuable theoretical link between behavior, households, and the mechanisms of change on mining frontiers. His notions of ethnic solidarity on the household level dovetail with arguments regarding workers' homes found in material culture studies and social history (*see*, for example, Cohen 1982). His ideas also suggest a basis for a subtle difference between boardinghouses in the company context and within the private sector.

Material Culture Studies

As an historical archaeologist, it is natural for Hardesty to view manmade objects as significant to understanding human behavior, hence his reference to household process evident in material culture. Although the scope of this boardinghouse project is not essentially archaeological, its arguments are underpinned by material culture studies. For roughly the past hundred years but more methodically since the 1960s, scholars from numerous disciplines—primarily social history, folklore, architectural history, women's studies, historical

and cultural geography, history of technology, and historical archaeology—have expanded their notion of "document" or "evidence" to include the material objects of everyday life (Lubar and Kingery 1993, Schlereth 1985, Prown 1982, Carson 1978, Stearns 1983).

Approaches to these materials differ and have changed over time. Antiquarians collect examples of a specific item and order them according to various sequences. Choice examples of an item have been analyzed for style and material from the perspective of the art historian (Prown 1982). While some researchers have sought the maker behind the object (Prown 1982, Deetz 1977), others have widened their view.

Social historians in particular have been drawn to material culture studies and the result has been mutually beneficial. Social history "involves two broad subject areas conventional history has largely ignored, . . . ordinary people, rather than the elite, . . . [and] ordinary activities, institutions, and modes of thought" (Stearns 1983: 4-5). Most objects of everyday existence are found in the context of ordinary people. Thus material culture (things) constitute data for social history.

In addition, scholars of material culture and of social history share a similar goal, to understand human behavior better. Both are more concerned with process than event. Moreover, both social history and material culture studies are grounded cross-culturally and in their collaboration they tend to expand research horizons for the other (Schlereth 1985, Stearns 1983, Lubar and Kingery 1993).

Significantly but not surprisingly, the dual notion of the household expressed by historical archaeologist Hardesty is echoed in material culture scholarship. "Dwelling is both process and artefact. It is the process of living at a location and it is the physical expression of doing so" (Oliver 1987: 7). Material

culture studies and allied social history abound with literature on dwellings, specific rooms, individual forms of furnishings and utensils, domestic mechanical systems, exterior accoutrements and landscape, plus formerly house-based rites of passage (birth, marriage, death) and domestic activities such as housework and taking in boarders. House forms figure prominently in studies of vernacular architecture (*see* Schlereth 1985 for a representative bibliography). The materials available suggest lines for examination of the Michigan boardinghouses or provide valuable insights that may be applied to the Michigan findings.

Studies useful for this project include Gwendolyn Wright (1981), Mark Peel (1986), Joan M. Jensen (1980), and Richard Horwitz (1973) since they specifically address the boardinghouse in cultural context. Morris Knowles (1920) and Leifur Magnusson (1920) provide specific information about American industrial housing against which to compare the Michigan findings. Additional sources (Hall 1969, Rapoport 1969, Altman and Chemers 1980, Oliver 1987, Landon 1989, Sanders 1990, and Lawrence 1990) demonstrate how the dwelling operates as an architectural response to social ideas such as privacy and status. Karen Halttunen (1989) links a physical shift in domestic social space to a change in cultural mindset, while Lizabeth A. Cohen (1982) explores social identity reflected in furnishings of workers' and middle class homes.

Among the ethnic structural influences evident in the Michigan mining region is the Finnish sauna (Lockwood 1977). The kitchen and food, a rich area of cultural investigation, prove particularly important to understanding life in the boardinghouse. Marjorie Kreidberg (1975) provides material for comparison to the Michigan data. Moreover, individual buildings contribute to and derive significance from the cultural landscape (Peirce Lewis 1993; Alanen 1979, 1982).

Thus a great many interpretative materials support a cultural investigation of the boardinghouses. One additional necessity, however, is a theoretical

model to direct analysis of the primary boardinghouse data. E. McClung Fleming (1982) supplies the most workable model for this part of the study because 1) it can be used with an actual boardinghouse or with documentary evidence such as photos or floorplans, and 2) it pushes the data to the widest consideration of cultural context, thereby taking full advantage of cross-disciplinary contributions and approaches.

Fleming's model for artifact study applies five classifications to the properties of the artifact (history, material, construction, design, and function) and performs four operations (identification, evaluation, cultural analysis, and interpretation) on each of the properties. The five properties concern more than just the size and shape or age of the artifact. For example:

> History includes where and when it was made, by whom and for whom and why, and successive changes in ownership, condition, and function. . . . Function embraces both the uses (intended functions) and the roles (unintended functions) of the object in its culture. (Fleming 1982: 166)

The evaluation operation can and often should extend beyond a subjective appraisal of craftsmanship. Cultural and spatial qualities are also important.

> Evaluation can result in applying . . . such adjectives as similar, unique, early example. . . . Evaluation might compare the given artifact with . . . similar ones made by other craftsmen in the same subculture. An artifact made in one region might be compared with a similar one made in another region. (168)

Cultural analysis "embraces the largest potential of artifact study." According to Fleming, "function involves both the concrete and the abstract aspects of the artifacts," both importance and meaning. Further, he points out that occasionally such analysis "will indicate the ways in which the artifact became an agent of major change within its culture" (169). Additional considerations under this operation include value (intrinsic and perceived) and identification with specific groups, areas, or processes.

The essence of Fleming's cultural analysis lies in the notion of intersections between the artifact and other historical condition (real intersections) and between the artifact and ideas and attitudes in its culture of origin (virtual intersections). Virtual intersections are conjectures of the researcher and thus not provable, but offer the possibility of identifying cultural explanation nonetheless. Discovering or deriving these intersections relies on exploring what Fleming terms "product analysis (the ways in which a culture leaves its mark on a particular artifact) and content analysis (the ways a particular artifact reflects its culture)" (171).

In Fleming's scheme, interpretation considers the meaning or value of the artifact to the researcher's culture, i.e., assigns it a specific type of significance. One such interpretation for the boardinghouses is, as Hardesty suggests, a "colonizing unit" of the mining frontier. Hardesty (1980, 1985, 1988) and Fleming (1982) therefore provide justification and methodology for examining both the physical and the social boardinghouse in northern Michigan's mining region.

Summary

The intrinsic problem in historical studies is that the particularistic nature of the discipline allows each event to be viewed as inwardly spiralling, subjected to greater and greater magnification and thus higher resolution of internal detail, possibly at the expense of the wider picture. Focus on the boardinghouses heightens the potential for a narrow view, Fleming's model notwithstanding. However, since cosmopolitan frontiers depend more than any other upon the influences of external politics and social factors such as technology, cosmopolitan frontier theory forces specific detail into a broader and more complex context.

In combination, these theoretical bases have been both predictive and explanatory. The cosmopolitan frontier model (Hardesty 1980, 1985, 1988;

Steffen 1980; Lewis 1984) identifies key conditions that should have prevailed in northern Michigan during the growth of the mining industry, and their presence thus verifies the nature of the Michigan frontier and provides a basis for understanding its historical and social development.

Because the territory was raw wilderness when the mining era began and because mining was the reason for settlement of these remote and undeveloped areas even well into the twentieth century, cosmopolitan frontier theory argues that the mining companies would have had to become the primary organizational force behind settlement. They would have to supply the physical plant of their operations, including housing and basic community support for the labor force. Meanwhile, by virtue of being a cosmopolitan frontier and therefore tied to outside conditions, the mining venture would be vulnerable to market fluctuations, unsuitable or insufficient labor, inadequate transportation and technology, and insufficient capital investment as well as insufficient or inaccessible resources.

Mining efforts that could not compensate for these unfavorable conditions would be expected to fail. Thus economy and efficiency were critical in the companies' operations: it was imperative that they achieve the most efficacy from each expenditure, whether of money, time, or other resource. Since housing the labor force was physically mandatory, at least initially, the companies would be expected to do so with economy and efficiency in mind.

Needing to maintain a certain amount of fluidity in the labor force to respond to unfavorable conditions while simultaneously building a stable and loyal core of workers, Lewis' (1984) emphasis on company control suggests the companies could be expected to use whatever resources at their command to manipulate the labor force to their best advantage. Housing, as a necessity

already supplied and under company control, would reasonably become a manipulative tool both physically and ideologically.

Eventually there were also dwellings ("colonizing units") and settlements under private control. Both company and private settlements would be expected to conform to the dendritic pattern of frontier spatial development and the gradient of settlement types. Theoretically, the private and company communities could exist separately, compete against one another, and/or develop a symbiosis from the level of the boardinghouse.

While the companies would be expected to view their boardinghouses (and boarding in general) in terms of bottom-line company profit, residents and others in the community would be expected to have other perceptions of the meaning and significance of these structures and the institution of boarding. In the narrow view, private boardinghouses would be the economic concern of the community and the operating family rather than of the mining corporations, but much private enterprise would necessarily be dependent upon the mining-based economy, and the mining companies could have interest in the continued viability of private boarding. A preponderance of immigrant population in the mining regions, particularly men without families, would not only affect housing needs but would cause issues relating to ethnicity and surrogate family to take on great importance.

Deeper still, Fleming (1982) and others concerned with the built environment argue that cultural notions of what a house represents, how its spaces should be used, and how "house" relates to "home" determine the ultimate meaning of the dwelling and its relation to those who dwell within it. The relation between the corporate view and the people's view of the boardinghouse should reveal both the physical and conceptual roles fulfilled by the boardinghouses and the institution of boarding on the Michigan mining frontier.

Demonstrating the evolution of that mining frontier follows, beginning with a brief overview of its highly significant geography.

CHAPTER 2

MICHIGAN'S WESTERN UPPER PENINSULA
AS MINING FRONTIER

Geographical Orientation

Michigan's two peninsulas lie in the heart of the Great Lakes region in America's midwest. Of the five Great Lakes, the largest fresh-water bodies in the world, four define the peninsulas' form. The Lower Peninsula, the "mitten," projects northward for nearly three hundred miles from its common border with Ohio and Indiana. It is bounded by Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Erie. Small Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River link Lake Huron with Erie. The Upper Peninsula juts three hundred miles eastward from Wisconsin, separated from Canada by Lake Superior, the northernmost of the Great Lakes. Lakes Michigan and Huron define the peninsula's southern shore (Figure 1).
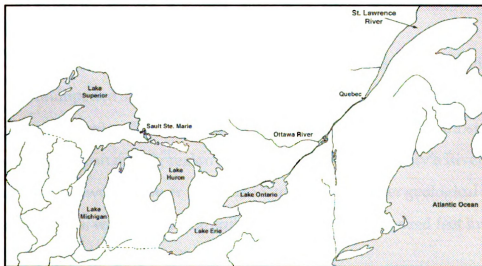
Figure 1. The Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

The narrow passage (about five miles) between the peninsulas through which the waters of Lake Michigan flow into Huron on their long way to the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic is known as the Straits of Mackinac. From prehistoric times this strait has been a significant spot for east-west and north-south trade and communication. Another significant waterway is the St. Mary's River, flowing from Lake Superior to Lake Huron and separating the northeastern tip of the U.P. from Canada. At this crossing-point is the oldest European-American settlement in Michigan, Sault Ste. Marie (commonly called the Soo). French explorers and missionaries established a trading post and mission there in 1668, having pushed their way westward from Montreal via the Ottawa River. They were not yet fully aware of the vast waterway before them.

Although the Great Lakes have proved a boon to the region in many ways over the centuries, their contribution to transportation is arguably their most valuable. Inter-lake travel links Duluth, Chicago, Marquette, the Soo, Escanaba, Detroit, Toledo, Buffalo, and Montreal. Rivers push the connections far inland, and the St. Lawrence River extends them into the Atlantic and hence around the globe. In the absence of roads or railroads through Michigan's wilderness interior, the Great Lakes waterway was invaluable for the early explorers and miners of upper Michigan.

It was not free of impediments, however. Two major physical barriers prevented unimpeded shipping between the western end of Lake Superior (primary mining region) and the lower lakes and the St. Lawrence. The most immediate to the Michigan mining region was the rapids at the St. Mary's River. Lake Huron is twenty-two feet lower than Lake Superior. The other geological barrier was Niagara Falls, where Lake Erie spills more than three hundred feet into Lake Ontario (Hudgins 1953).

Climate also plays havoc with Lakes access. The Great Lakes freeze over

each year, suspending shipping between November and spring, often as late as May. Although the thick ice provides foot or sled access across the Straits of Mackinac, or to Grand Island or Mackinac Island from the mainland, it more generally has deepened the isolation of the U.P. and its inhabitants for half of each year. Moreover, white squalls, shifting sandbars, the legendary gales of November, and other sudden surprises make Lakes travel potentially treacherous, even today.

The land is equally challenging. Much of the eastern U.P. is relatively flat, chiefly limestone and sandstone shelves—vestiges of ancient seas—covered by thin layers of poor soil and by large areas of swamp (Burroughs 1964). When Europeans discovered the region, it was cloaked by the dense pine and hardwood "forest primeval" immortalized by Longfellow.

The western half of the peninsula is more rugged, much of its northern shore high crags and sheer, weathered cliffs. Inland, the land tells of a tortuous geologic history. Extreme undulations are the result of glacial deposits and the same gouging that produced the Great Lakes. Volcanic activity concentrated igneous and metamorphic trap rock in the west, and later upheavals thrust much of the region high above the Lakes. Eons of erosion then exposed some of the mineral deposits. In the far west, an escarpment rises to form the Porcupine Mountains, so inaccessible their virgin pine and hemlock forests escaped the voracious nineteenth-century lumbermen (Santer 1977, Martin 1964, Hudgins 1953, Kelley 1964).

Jutting from the northwestern corner of the U.P. into Lake Superior is yet another peninsula, the Keweenaw. An average of about twenty-five miles wide and eighty-five miles long from Ontonagon to Copper Harbor, this finger of land was split along its length, a fault line thrusting upwards at about a forty-degree incline. Near the tip of the Keweenaw rises Brockway Mountain, part of the

same escarpment that forms the Porcupine Mountains. A modern road, Brockway Mountain Drive, lies over a thousand feet above Lake Superior and is the highest road between the Alleghenies and the Rockies. The Huron Mountains, Michigan's highest elevation, are to the east across Keweenaw Bay. At the bottom of a chasm that cuts across the Keweenaw Peninsula is the Portage River and Portage Lake, effectively making the top portion of the Keweenaw into an island.

One more remnant of the volcanic activity that formed the Keweenaw is Isle Royale, lying more than fifty miles northwest of the Keweenaw near the north shore of Lake Superior (Martin 1964, Santer 1977).

Numerous rivers feed Superior from this region, many of them dropping from great heights forming falls and rapids. The western U.P. was also covered with dense pine and hardwood forests except where huge knobs, peaks, and slabs of rock outcropping are found. It is difficult to fathom the immensity of these forests. Just the pine holdings of a single lumber company in Ontonagon County totalled one hundred thousand acres, estimated to contain six hundred million board feet of timber—enough to fill a train over nine hundred miles long! (Ewen Centennial 1989: 30).

The southern boundary of the western half of the U.P. abuts Wisconsin. The Great Lakes shoreline, which varies from sand and stone beaches to rugged cliffs of limestone and red sandstone, is formed by Green Bay and Big Bay de Noc, northwestern extensions of Lake Michigan.

All the severity of the Lakes climate is also felt on land. Winters are long, cold, and snowy. Copper Harbor, near the tip of the Keweenaw, "is further north than Quebec" (Dersch 1977:293). Annual snowfall can exceed three hundred inches in some areas. Summer temperatures are mild; the growing season short. Bear and deer, still prevalent, were among the larger wildlife hunted by early

settlers who also noted the chilling effect of nightly serenades by nearby howling wolves. Moreover, ravenous mosquitoes and blackflies make an otherwise idyllic summer day totally miserable.

The perception of Michigan's western U.P. has changed radically with time in concert with the increasing national nostalgia for wilderness (Nash 1967). What now is viewed as valuable recreation land, unspoiled nature, and breathtaking scenery was seen by early arrivals as formidable, dangerous, even hostile territory. One of many ironies of the history of the mining efforts in Michigan is that the easiest mineral areas to reach and therefore the first exploited were those closest to the south Superior shore, yet this region was the most isolated from population centers, supplies, and markets, and the most difficult to inhabit. The mineral lands of Michigan's western U.P. were eventually developed, but not without several false starts that point up the tenuous balance that must be maintained by a successful cosmopolitan frontier.

<u>Mineral Resources</u>

As with most stories of development, natural resources provide the impetus. Long before automobiles, Michigan's "big three" were fur, timber, and minerals. The minerals came first. Between 3.5 billion and 220 million years ago, volcanic and other geologic activity laid down massive deposits of iron and nearly pure native copper in what would eventually become the western half of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Native copper, a rare form found nowhere else to the extent it is in Michigan, is copper in its metallic form, not chemically combined with other materials. The copper concentrated in a strip running from the Porcupine Mountains on the southwest (Ontonagon County) up through the spine of the Keweenaw Peninsula (Houghton and Keweenaw Counties) and on Isle Royale.
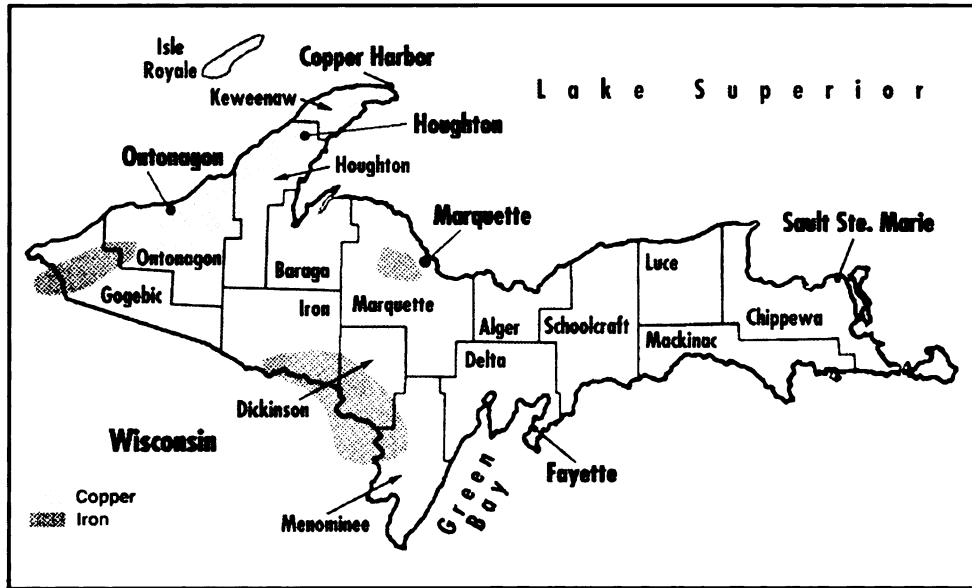
Figure 2. Mineral Areas of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Three separate iron ranges formed. The Marquette Range occupies the west central portion of what is now Marquette County. The Menominee Range spans the Michigan-Wisconsin border and lies in three Michigan counties, running from Amasa and Iron River in Iron County, through southern Dickinson County, and into northern Menominee County. The Gogebic Range, which also spans the Wisconsin-Michigan line, occupies the western part of Gogebic County, particularly in the Ironwood-Bessemer-Wakefield area.

Important supply and processing sites were established in Baraga, Alger, and Delta Counties, so these regions, too, are included within the mining sphere of activity. Smaller deposits of gold, silver, lead, zinc, nickel, cobalt, uranium, and platinum ores were also in the igneous and metamorphic rock of the area, but it was the copper and iron that played the largest role in developing the region (Santer 1977, Swineford 1876, Fountain 1992, Hudgins 1953).

The first mining of Michigan copper was carried out by the early aboriginal peoples of the region about 3000-1000 B.C.E. They located large outcroppings of native copper both on the mainland and on Isle Royale and extracted it

with stone tools, leaving behind hundreds of pits marking some of the choicest veins. Michigan copper thence moved into a pan-continental trade network, supplying the material for weapons and ceremonial objects (Halsey 1983: 32-41, Fitting 1970, Benedict 1952: 20-27, Clarke 1975a: 8).

European Colonization

The French were the first Europeans to penetrate the upper Great Lakes. Disappointed in their search for the fabled Northwest Passage, they "made do" by exploiting the already-developed fur trade, diverting the pelts supplied by the Ottawa, Chippewa, and others to the entrepot at Montreal and thence to France and European fashion markets in exchange for European goods (Dunbar 1965, Jamison 1948, Cleland 1992, Nute 1974, White 1991b). Few settlements were established: instead, missions, military forts, and trading posts comprised the majority of the French outposts.

Although numerous Jesuit missionaries and other visitors to the Keweenaw had recorded the presence of copper from 1636, the French demonstrated little initial interest in pursuing it, especially after excited claims of finding "gold" and "diamonds" in their North American holdings had proved to be a crushing disappointment: samples of the supposed mineral wealth examined in France were discovered to be nothing more than pyrite ("fool's gold") and quartz (Dunbar 1965, Jamison 1948, Cleland 1992, Krause 1992).

Minimal attempts to capitalize on the scattering of surface copper merely pointed up the enterprise's futility until lodes from which these scatterings had broken off were discovered. Moreover, "these attempts were to be compromised by great difficulties of transportation, repeated Indian hostilities, and, ultimately, a lack of enough demand for the metal to make the efforts profitable" (Krause 1992: 32). The French finally gave up their hope of matching Spain's mineral

wealth from their New World holdings. The British did little more.

In 1763 as the result of another of their innumerable wars, the French lost control of the Great Lakes territory to the British after more than a century of occupation. The British held legal claim to the area for only two decades, until the end of the American Revolution. However, the appeal of the strategic sites at Detroit and at Mackinac to protect the fur trade through Montreal was so great that British occupation of Michigan Territory ended only after defeat in the War of 1812.

During its legal control of the upper Great Lakes region, much of Britain's attention was occupied by its disgruntled subjects. Pontiac's War in 1763 that captured all but three of the British forts west of the Alleghenies was an out-growth of long-standing Indian dissatisfaction with British treatment. British troubles were further exacerbated by negative reaction from both French-Canadian and English-speaking colonists to the Proclamation of 1763 and the Quebec Act of 1774. These plus unpopular attempts to raise revenue from the coastal colonies kept British attention diverted from Lake Superior copper except briefly in 1771 (Bald 1954: Chapters 6 & 7).

A group of British businessmen and mineralogists led by Alexander Henry incorporated in 1770 to mine silver and copper along the shores of Lake Superior. Henry, an intrepid trader who had survived the bloody attack at Ft. Michilimackinac in 1763 meant to drive the British from native lands, had been led by native guides fourteen miles up the Ontonagon River to large outcrops of pure copper. Here were masses of copper from several pounds to tons in size: the largest was a huge boulder gleaming in the river, polished by long years of wave action. Henry estimated it at "'no less than five tons'" (Johanson 1993: 6).

This Ontonagon Boulder inspired Henry and his would-be miners to seek the "mother lode" from which it had come, but as would be true for many

subsequent speculators, they lacked sufficient manpower and equipment and the necessary technical knowledge to succeed. Although no richer for their endeavor, they would become wiser. The venture, financed in part by King George III and the Duke of Gloucester, was aborted.

It did inspire a succession of cartographers, however, to designate the Ontonagon region, much like a pirate chart with "X-marks-the spot," as the location for "virgin copper" (Dunbar 1965, Martin 1986, Krause 1992, Johanson 1993). Thus the western half of the Upper Peninsula remained largely untouched except for fur-trapping, but that isolation was soon to end under American control.

American Territory

It is an often-told story. Initially the Upper Peninsula was an undifferentiated part of the Northwest Territory and logically or at least geographically, perhaps it should have ended up part of Wisconsin, but politics conspired against geography. Following the War of 1812, the American federal government encouraged settlement of the West by ordering land surveys. Surveyors came to Michigan, but encountered swamp in the southern regions of Oakland County and assumed the worst about the whole state. Surveyor Edward Tiffin's report pronounced Michigan Territory one unconquerable swamp and soon thereafter the error became accepted truth.

Consequently, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois drew settlers in higher numbers and, therefore, became states earlier. When by 1836, thanks to the Erie Canal (opened 1825) and dauntless Michigan settlers' glowing reports, the lower peninsula had drawn enough population for statehood, a squabble over a strip of land claimed by both Michigan and Ohio resulted in delays and political wrangling. Ohio, with more political clout as a state, won the Toledo Strip and

in recompense Michigan received the Upper Peninsula. It appeared to be a fool's trade until in 1840 the copper was publicly rediscovered (Dunbar 1965).

Opening the Copper Mining Frontier

Hasty negotiations followed, since at the time the state could not legally exploit this area: it was still under Native American control. In what now appears a virtual re-play of events a decade earlier in Georgia when gold was discovered on Cherokee lands (Steffen 1980), Lake Superior and Mississippi bands of Chippewa ceded their native lands from Marquette to Duluth to the federal government through the Treaty of LaPointe (1842) and opened the way to the copper boom and more.

In 1840, state geologist Douglass Houghton's report to the Michigan legis-lature drew state and ultimately national attention to the copper deposits. By 1843, the public focused even more excitedly on the Michigan copper region when the Federal government moved the Ontonagon boulder to the Smithsonian
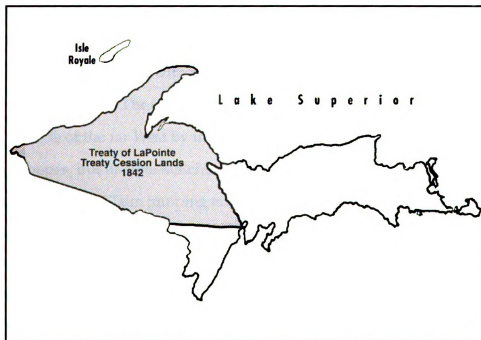
Figure 3. Lands ceded by Treaty of LaPointe, 1842.

Institution. Result: the speculators' copper rush of 1843-44 (Dunbar 1965).

Serious mining operations began in 1845 with outcrops on the northwestern Keweenaw and produced 26,880 pounds that year. Development of the opposite end of the copper belt, at Ontonagon, began almost simultaneously, followed ultimately by exploitation of the middle and most productive region, near Portage Lake (Houghton-Hancock). Production rapidly increased to a high in 1916 of nearly 270 million pounds and an all-time production to 1968 of 10,815,687,423 pounds and more than $1.5 billion in value (Hudgins 1953; Santer 1977; Gates 1951; Krause 1992; Thurner 1994: 301).

The cost, however, was also high. As the Alexander Henry episode had demonstrated, the area was too remote and mining too expensive and arduous to have become an active pursuit under colonization focused on other endeavors (Michigan 1893; Swineford 1876). Mining the Michigan resources also required far more technical expertise than first envisioned. Discoveries and innovations of the Industrial Revolution that proved essential to serious mining had been unanticipated by Henry's men seventy-five years before.

At first, the copper fields were opened to prospectors who acquired a lease from the government with a twenty-thousand-dollar surety bond on a share-the-profit basis. The scene anticipated the swarms who would descend on the gold fields of the far West by the end of the decade. With picks and shovels and high hopes, but naivete matching that of Henry's men, many found nothing but economic ruin. Claim jumping and fraud at the land registry offices were prevalent. Eventually land was sold outright.

Then the speculators moved in, inflating the land prices a thousand-fold or more. Copper (and iron) mining requires heavy and expensive equipment, an extensive investment in a physical plant in proximity to the mineral, and lots of cheap labor. Painfully these facts became apparent and Eastern investors

("foreign investors" in relation to the state and region) fueled the mining operations in Michigan (Jamison 1948, Martin 1986, Michigan 1893, Gates 1951, Krause 1992).

Even with "big money" behind many of the operations, stockholders were frequently disappointed. Rich veins could suddenly pinch out before start-up costs had been recouped; disasters (fires, cave-in's, floods) always loomed; labor shortages, inadequate transportation, declining prices and markets, and poor management jeopardized even the most productive site.

Cheap labor, however, quickly became abundant. News spread about the opportunity for riches in northern Michigan's howling wilderness and along with the prospectors and the speculators and the Eastern investors came immigrants looking to make their fortune. Coincidental with the opening of the Michigan copper mines, lead mines in Wisconsin began operation. These drew Cornish miners experienced in deep mining for tin and copper whose home resources were depleting. Many of these Cornishmen either migrated to Michigan from Wisconsin or directly from their home country in response to a call for a "Cousin Jack" where more hands were needed. They were particularly valuable to the fledgling Michigan operations since they had extensive experience in both mining techniques and the technology of mining equipment (Gates 1951, Fisher 1945, Johanson 1993, Thurner 1994).

Spurred particularly by the potato famine of 1846-50, Irish also poured into the Keweenaw. Though they lacked technical expertise in mining and therefore commanded lower wages, they were strong and willing workers. Ethnic hatred raged between the Irish and Cornish and numerous brawls and bloodshed resulted (Swineford 1876, Martin 1986, Jamison 1948, Thurner 1994, Lankton and Hyde 1981).

Early in the nineteenth century Michigan had sponsored an aggressive

recruitment program for German settlers to its rich lower-peninsula farmlands. Opportunities in the mining regions quickly joined the list of inducements to German settlement (Thurner 1994, Alanen 1991a, 1991b, Rubenstein and Ziewacz 1981).

Canadians also comprised a significant portion of the work force from the earliest stages of industry development (Alanen 1991a, Thurner 1994, Cummings 1991, Sell 1990, Rubenstein and Ziewacz 1981).

Among the other dominant ethnic groups associated with copper mining were the Italians, who began arriving in the 1850s. They, like the Irish, were hired as unskilled labor in the mines, generally as trammers, men with strong backs and arms with great physical endurance who loaded the ore into cars. Italian immigration increased dramatically later in the century (Magnaghi 1987).

By the turn of the century Finns comprised yet another large ethnic component of the copper mining communities. Drawn primarily from fundamentalist Lutheran peasantry, the Finns dedicated themselves to family, community, and hard work. Many of the initial Finns in Michigan were sojourners, earning a stake so they could buy farmlands in the "breadbasket" states. Chain migration, as with the other ethnic groups, ultimately induced more to come and to stay in Michigan (Gedicks 1977, Hoglund 1974, Thurner 1994). Eventually, scores of nationalities were represented across the mining districts, reflecting every corner of the globe.

Meanwhile, the copper mining operation was evolving from many small competing firms into an industry dominated by a few large and powerful companies who could muster the huge capital investment and withstand the long period between set-up and profit. Initial copper mining operations began in 1845, but new finds and re-development of abandoned sites continued into the 1960s, extending the process of frontier development in the region for well over a

century. By 1920 and the beginning of the decline of the industry as a whole,
three giant companies predominated: Calumet and Hecla (C&H) on the upper
Keweenaw, Quincy at Hancock, and South Range in Ontonagon and southern
Houghton Counties.

Many real costs were only indirectly connected to the actual mining oper-
ation, but necessary all the same. Lumbering operations provided timbers for
shoring mines and material for plank and corduroy roads. Logs, sawn lumber,
and wooden shingles became company buildings, both at the mines and to
house the labor force. Even more wood was necessary for heat and to fuel
steam-driven mine machinery (Jamison 1969, Harlow 1849-59).

Cost and inconvenience to transport in-coming supplies and the out-
going ore to processing sites in Chicago, Detroit, or elsewhere through the St.
Mary's rapids spurred construction of the locks there in 1855. Eventual railroad
links eased the seasonal limitation on shipping—the Copper Country was virtu-
ally isolated between November and May when the Great Lakes froze over and
shipping suspended. Getting the product to market was vital and over time as
much as 80 percent of Michigan copper production reached the world market
(Martin 1986, Gates 1951, Krause 1992, Benedict 1952).

Among the human costs of mining were health, happiness, safety, and
even life. Technology advanced with the demands of the industry, allowing for
deeper penetration of the veins of copper, but mining was risky, even deadly.
"Between 1855 and 1975 at least 2,000 men lost their lives while at work in
Keweenaw copper mines." During the peak years of operation, 1885-1920, loss
averaged about forty lives per year of operation. "From 1905 to 1915, some 50 to
60 deaths occurred in Houghton County alone" (Lankton 1983: 34). Advanced
technology that threatened both job security and personal safety was at the heart
of the most severe labor unrest in Michigan's mining region, the Copper Strike of

1913-14. On the other hand, meeting worker's physical needs by providing adequate and inexpensive housing became a primary function of the mining companies.

Iron Mining

The history of iron mining in Michigan mirrors that of copper in many respects. Local Native Americans were aware of and used iron-bearing substances millennia before contact with Europeans. Hard rock forms were fashioned into jewelry, body armor, weapons, and tools; soft red ocher was used ceremonially as body paint for both the living and dead. Certain hunter-gatherer groups made such extensive use of the substance in burial ritual that they have been called the "Red Ocher People" (Halsey 1983, 1994).

American surveyor William Burt discovered the huge concentrations of iron almost simultaneously with Houghton's report on the copper. Surveying the north central Upper Peninsula in September, 1844, Burt and his crew noticed gyrations of the magnetic compass needle and sought its cause. Burt's report of a mountain of iron (part of the Marquette Range) near Teal Lake (Negaunee) opened the second component of the mining industry in the Upper Peninsula. Continuing his survey work with the solar compass he had invented, Burt later located additional iron deposits, including portions of the Western Menominee Range (Swineford 1876).

Iron mining, both open pit and deep shaft, promoted and responded to improved mining technology as did the copper industry, and both industries felt the impact of shifting product demand and availability. The wide range of financial centers responsible for developing the iron reserves is merely suggested by a partial list of the region's iron companies. Among those named for the homes of the investors: Jackson (Michigan), Cleveland, Buckeye (Ohio), Clinton (New

York). Behind such early iron companies as the Pioneer, Deer Lake, Bancroft, and Michigan were financiers in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Detroit, and Chicago, respectively (LaFayette 1977).

Major corporations ultimately came to dominate the industry: Cleveland-Cliffs Iron (CCI) on the Marquette and eastern Menominee Ranges; Pickands, Mather on the Marquette and Gogebic Ranges; and the Oglebay, Norton, the M. A. Hanna, and the Oliver Mining Companies on the Gogebic and Menominee (Hatcher 1950).

Immigrants swelled the labor force: Canadians, Germans, Italians, Irish, and Swedes comprised the largest percentage of the workers, with many of the Cornish preferring deep mining to surface iron mining on the basis that they "weren't no bloody ditch diggers." Iron companies, like the copper, had to build and equip elaborate mine and processing sites and to house and otherwise provide for the needs of the workers, adding to the drain on investment.

Transportation posed obstacles for iron mining and for the same reasons as for copper. Access to mine sites was difficult at best and roads and railroads required time, labor, and money to construct. The first iron enterprise, on the Marquette Range in the late 1840s, failed largely due to lack of efficient means of transport from the forge near Negaunee to the port at Marquette, a distance of no more than twelve miles.

Nearly four decades separate the discovery of iron on the Menominee and Gogebic Ranges and its exploitation, principally due to the remoteness of the areas: development of these two ranges depended upon rail accessibility. Anticipated development of the Menominee Range early in the 1870s was stalled until the end of the decade when the railroad industry had recovered from the Panic of 1873; similarly, the Gogebic Range, also discovered during the 1840s, did not begin development until the 1880s when rail transport became available

(Ingalls 1871, Cummings 1991, Dulan 1978, Sell 1990, Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Co, et. al. 1964).

Although the Great Lakes offered a natural path of transportation to smelting operations in Cleveland and Pittsburgh, the falls at the Soo were an expensive impediment that could not be overcome too soon and entrepots on Green Bay were of small value before rail access. Ultimately, by rail and by ship, Michigan iron entered the world market, connecting Michigan's periphery to Wall Street, the international industrial complex, and the vicissitudes of global politics and economics (Hudgins 1953, Reimann 1951, Santer 1977, Martin 1986, Stakel 1994).

<u>Timber</u>

The third means of resource development in early Michigan centered on its timber. Much of Michigan was forested when it was settled in the 1800s and millions of board feet of pine and hardwoods were sacrificed to clear land for farming because it was just too expensive in time and energy to do anything but cut and burn off the forests (Barillas 1989). Nevertheless, what remained became a lucrative harvest.

Michigan's lumbering industry *per se* is outside the scope of this investigation. The mining companies, however, engaged in timbering and encouraged others to supply their needs in the mines (a popular saying is that "the best of Michigan's forests are underground"), for auxiliary buildings, and to feed the many beehive ovens that produced tons of charcoal, fuel for the smelting furnaces. Those operations were subject to many of the same problems and conditions as the central mining operations, including the need to recruit, maintain, and house a labor force (Gates 1951, Worth 1978, LaFayette 1977, Mueller 1993).

Therefore, the boardinghouse data below include a few examples from this component of the mining industry.

Michigan's Mining Frontier

Exploitation of Michigan's ore deposits has twice resulted in the area becoming an extractive frontier, first for the aboriginal peoples and then for the industrializing nineteenth-century Americans. In each case, the critical requirements of technology, transportation, labor, and perceived value came together in sufficient degree for successful mining, though the contrasts in sophistication and scale are obvious. There is no way of knowing how many Indian laborers toiled in the extraction pits on Isle Royale and the Keweenaw, nor are there records of every nineteenth-century prospector or mine laborer who drifted through seeking the copper, iron, silver or gold of Michigan; what is certain is that whether using hot rocks and hand hammers, or picks, black powder, and mechanical drills, mining Michigan was a labor-intensive proposition.

As already noted, during the modern phase of mining the field was initially thrown open to individual prospectors and speculators. Explorers and surveyors also roamed the region. The Michigan-Wisconsin boundary was not physically established until 1847, a decade after Michigan had achieved statehood (with a significant bonus to Wisconsin's favor because of surveyor error) (Sell 1990). Surveying and land registration continued for many years as new regions of wilderness were penetrated. Once the short-lived surge of individual hopefuls gave way to the organized mining concerns, there was what has often been called a "flood of immigration" to the region. The need for laborers was clear and the opportunities to provide goods and services drew thousands more. Housing the throngs became critical.

Shifting Demographics

Federal census records produced each decade record the population growth at these specific points in time and seem to support the image of a "flood" of humanity filling the mining region. The boom-bust cycles of extractive frontiers suggest this conclusion may be too simplistic, however, and the cosmopolitan frontier model predicts fluctuations of population type and distribution between these decade markers due to a variety of causes, some not even directly linked to mining. Such was the case.

Table 1. Population of Michigan's western Upper Peninsula, 1850-1930. (Source of data: Hawley 1949: 19)

Census Year	Population
1850	1,233
1860	16,623
1870	35,962
1880	56,506
1890	102,194
1900	164,654
1910	215,791
1920	218,916
1930	204,608

The census data are deceiving in that much population fluctuation did occur between these time markers. Several national situations caused significant shifts in the region's population, particularly among the male work force, and thus influenced housing needs in Michigan's mining regions.

The Civil War was one such influence. A federal tariff on Spanish copper in 1863 and war-time inflation allowed Michigan copper prices to reach 55¢ per pound in 1864 (nearly tripling from 19.1¢ in 1861) at the same time the war was creating a greater demand for the metal—and hence for miners. Meeting

enlistment quotas, however, severely cut into the mining labor force already in place, resulting in an intense labor shortage. Enlistment bounties up to one thousand dollars per man further decimated the labor ranks (Thurner 1994, Alanen 1991a, Murdoch 1943, Lankton and Hyde 1982).

In desperation, the mining companies paid New Englanders to substitute for Michigan soldiers. They also paid passage for hundreds of Canadian and Scandinavian would-be miners, but military recruiters aboard ship induced about thirty of these men to enlist in the war effort before they had even set foot on American soil; others simply refused to work in the mines and to repay the company for their fares, so these men, too, were lost to the mining labor force. Meanwhile, high copper prices stimulated further exploration and opening of new shafts, drawing yet more workers from the producing mines (Robinson 1938, Mason Introduction 1991, Lankton and Hyde 1982).

The post-war decades exhibited wide economic fluctuation in response to multiple conflicting factors. The war-inflated price of copper deflated dramatically, causing a major slump in the industry and becoming part of the national Panic of 1873. The Panic meant less demand for iron and also temporarily stalled railroad expansion, limiting iron mine development in the Gogebic and Menominee Ranges. In response to unemployment and an uncertain job outlook, some Marquette Range miners launched an unsuccessful strike (Magnaghi 1982: 59-63).

On the other hand, the early antebellum period produced numerous technological developments that improved mining. Application of the Bessemer and the Hewitt processes to produce steel and the introduction of electricity for power and light stimulated the demand for iron and copper respectively (Current, Williams, and Freidel 1975: 450-52). The Michigan mining industry soon recovered from the post-war slump and then expanded, absorbing the increasing immigration through the decade of the 1880s.

The Panic of 1893 cut a broad swath through the economic structure of the country. In only six months, more than eight thousand companies folded, banks closed, railroads failed, and international trade dried up. Twenty percent (over a million) of the nation's workers were without jobs (Current, Williams, and Freidel 1975: 531) resulting in widespread relocations and extensive return migration. Michigan's iron mining region was particularly hard hit: just at the time national and international demand for iron disappeared and Michigan's iron stockpiles sat unsold, Minnesota's Mesabi iron range opened, increasing iron supplies. Iron prices, already 70 percent lower than a decade earlier, declined further. Layoffs, wage cuts, and mine closings followed (Hatcher 1950).

Michigan social historian Terry S. Reynolds (1994: 28) reports that "on the Gogebic Range, mining employed 10,000 in 1892 but only 800 in 1896. On the Marquette Range . . . employment in iron mines dropped from over 17,000 in 1892 to 3,500 one year later." On the Menominee Range, *The Range-Tribune* of August 3, 1893, reported that except for two supervisors, "the entire working force at the Hamilton-Ludington mines [near Iron Mountain] was discharged last Tuesday evening. The mines will now be permitted to fill with water."

Even the mighty Chapin Mine, which had fought for months to stay in operation by way of wage reductions and layoffs of the single men in its employ, shut down on August 12 for "sixty days." When the Chapin did resume (nine months later) and began assembling a minimal work force, *The Range-Tribune* noted that "quite a number of the oldest and most valued employees have left the country . . ." (Cummings 1991: 112-17).

The situation prevailed across the mining region. Earlier news accounts had reported the departure of hundreds of Italians for Naples from the Iron Mountain region alone (Cummings 1991: 113). Numbers of Gogebic Range miners also sought economic stability elsewhere, including the American West and

Mexico (Sell 1990). The population of Marquette County increased only 4 percent during the decade of the 1890s and immigrant population declined (-15 percent), a sharp contrast to earlier decades and highly suggestive of a major out-migration in response to the economic catastrophe.
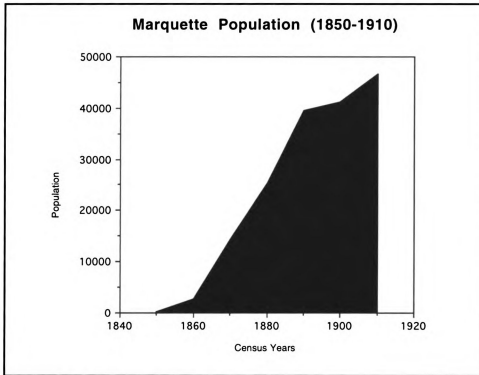
Figure 4. Population of Marquette County, 1850-1910. (Data from Alanen 1991a)

During the 1870s, for example, Marquette County's total population increased by 44 percent (immigrant population by nearly 56 percent). In the next ten years the county population exceeded 39,500, a 56 percent increase over the 1880 figure. The decade 1900-1910, following the major depression, again showed increase of both overall and immigrant population (13.3 percent and 2.6 percent respectively) (U.S. Census figures in Alanen 1991a).

Actually, it was not just the national Panics that sent miners elsewhere. Between about 1880 and 1930 an estimated four million European immigrants to America, including a portion of those who came to Michigan's mining region,

returned home to stay (Wyman 1993: 6). The lure of better opportunity elsewhere in North America also kept many miners and others on the move throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and beyond. Gold, silver, and copper in the West and Southwest, gold in the Yukon—they all contributed to the shifting population. Wanderlust also compelled numerous individuals to relocate frequently. Many personal odysseys included or ended in the American or Canadian West, so sagas of the region contain records of sojourners who came from or passed through Michigan. Moreover, the most mobile of the men were not necessarily single, as the Michigan mining companies assumed. Elliott West (1987: 184) cites the reaction of one Colorado miner's wife, representative of those who ultimately reared their children alone, when her husband announced yet another relocation:

> "Ernest, you can move on if you have to, but I've dragged two boys and a houseful of furniture just as far as I'm going to. First it was Ohio, then Michigan, then the Peninsula, then Minnesota, Michigan again, then Denver, Weaver, and Creede, and right here I'm going to stay."

Also, during World War I and into the 1920s, the national shift from rural areas to industrial cities became a serious loss factor to Michigan's mining industry. In the U.P. the auto industry, and particularly Henry Ford, became the focus of competition for the labor pool. Ford's Upper Peninsula properties included the Imperial and Blueberry Mines on the Marquette Range; extensive timbering facilities in L'Anse, Pequaming, and Munising; and manufacturing at Kingsford and Big Bay (DeLongchamp 1983). *The Daily Tribune-Gazette* of August 2, 1920, reported in part that "A large number who desire to work at the [Iron Mountain auto] factory are former Iron Mountain residents. The copper country is [also] well represented in the list of applicants" (Cummings 1991: 257).

Ford's enterprises were a mixed blessing, as that announcement suggests. Expanded economic base and even return migration to the iron regions was

offset by a severe population drain on the Copper Country. Thousands funneled from the Keweenaw into Ford employment, particularly "below" at Flint, Pontiac, and Detroit. Houghton County's population decreased by 40 percent (88,000 to 56,000) between 1910 and 1930. The labor shortage in the copper region became so pressing that the Federal government, which had instituted immigration restrictions in 1921, made an exception on behalf of the major copper companies allowing them to import workers from Mexico, Canada, Cornwall, and Germany—a not altogether successful measure (Lankton 1991: 246).

Local and regional situations also affected population and consequent housing. For example, a deadly typhoid fever epidemic swept through Ironwood during the summer of 1893, already a catastrophic year (Sell 1990). Iron Mountain lost hundreds to bouts with diphtheria, typhoid fever, and scarlet fever in that same period (Dulan 1978).

Mines, stamping mills, and furnaces started and stopped operations for various reasons and often with little or no notice. New owners, strong markets, changed technology, discovery of resources, timely and effective repairs opened or re-vitalized operations. Conversely, floods, fires, cave-ins, explosions, depletion of resources, inadequate technology, and loss of market could mean shutdown for a week, a year, or permanently. Populations in mining regions were continually in flux, usually the workers dancing to nature's or the companies' tune, but occasionally the workers became the pipers. Certainly this was true for Michigan's mineral region.

Strikes of varying scale had occurred periodically for years throughout the mining region, but the Copper Strike of 1913-14 was arguably the most traumatic. Wages and work hours were issues, but concern focused on the perceived threat to jobs and safety from the new one-man-drill. Antagonisms escalated as

the Western Federation of Miners and other radical factions clashed, exploiting the situation for their own aims. Hired thugs, imported security men, and even the National Guard added to the violence and bloodshed (Thurner 1984, Committee 1913, Records 1914, Lankton and Hyde 1982).

Over fourteen thousand mining employees were affected. In the early weeks of the fracas, the companies lost about twenty-five hundred of their labor force to out-migration, many of these their most experienced and dependable employees. Concentrations of Hungarians, Poles, Italians, Lithuanians, Cornish, and Finns were among those gone, many permanently. Even those who stayed contributed to population shifts. When violence became too intense in one area, men who wanted to work fled to nearby communities, swamping boardinghouses there (Thurner 1984: 117).

The out-migration continued past the strike years, creating extreme labor shortages. Although the companies instituted the more productive one-man-drill, during the strike and for several years after they struggled to regain production levels and to rebuild a stable work force by importing laborers. Turnover rates escalated: Larry Lankton and Charles Hyde (1982: 130) report that "Quincy hired 2,525 new workers in 1917 but enlarged its labor force by only 90 men." Loss to the auto plants was by this time augmented by the draft and enlistment for World War I (Lankton and Hyde 1982, Thurner 1994, Jamison 1967).

Although countless other population shifts, great and small, occurred through the century-plus of mining activity, it should be clear from the examples above that from its inception the mining industry in Michigan was highly erratic, subject to mad swings between boom and bust and numerous fluctuations between. As Steffen's (1980) and Hardesty's (1985) models argue and the examples above illustrate, this was a cosmopolitan, industrial frontier closely tied to

its national and international markets and outside funding, highly dependent upon technology, transportation, and labor.

Moreover, unlike the agrarian pioneers who claimed or bought a parcel of land and built a cabin or sod house upon it to establish their own private domain, mining industry workers entered a corporate structure of not only managers and company policies, but also of a physical plant that simultaneously needed to be permanent yet transitory, substantial but ephemeral. Thus, developments such as Ford's five-dollar-a-day wage or the Civil War influenced whether or not a carpenter would be ordered to construct another boarding-house on Quincy Hill.

Housing represented a physical need of the workers and therefore a necessary component of the physical plant established by the mining companies, but it also constituted a corporate tool, a means by which the company could manipulate its work force. How all this played out, particularly in regard to the boardinghouses, will be elaborated in subsequent chapters. However, one additional bit of analysis of the populations served by that housing is needed first.

Analysis of Population Growth Rates

So far this section has addressed quantity of population and numbers of workers. Besides questions of *how many?*, other considerations of the population are also intrinsic to the issue of housing, specifically *who?* and *who, when?* What was the distribution of the population by ethnic identity, gender, marital/family situation, and age at critical points in regional development?

Initially, the mining regions were wilderness tracts with a scattering of trappers, traders, fishermen, and the like. That situation changed with the opening of the mining region, but not as "overnight" as common belief suggests. Months, even years, often elapsed between initial discovery of ore bodies and

their full-scale exploitation. Building and mining sites needed to be identified, ore samples taken and evaluated, investors secured and corporations formed, supplies purchased and transported, and appropriately skilled personnel added to the team before site construction could even begin. Moreover, when all those criteria could be met, lack of effective transportation links such as railroads could stall development for decades. Ultimately, however, land clearing, building, and small-scale operations followed. Therefore, in the earliest stage of a region's development, population was small and grew slowly.

Among the first serious explorations on the Keweenaw was that of the Eagle Harbor Mining Company, begun in 1845. That summer Superintendent Thomas Sprague and a handful of miners sank five pits along one vein and extracted eight thousand pounds of copper ore. Twelve men worked with Sprague in 1846 (Monette 1977). By November, five families, including seven children under age twelve, were residents. Total population was thirty-three, among them eight miners and additional mining employees. During the following summer they produced thirty-eight tons of ore from one pit, including five tons of native copper (Clarke 1975b).

By 1850 the entire population of Houghton County (which included what later was set off as Keweenaw County) amounted to only 708 individuals: "515 white males, 1 black male, and 192 females" (Thurner 1994: 63). Four years later the population had quadrupled, evidence of the copper boom taking hold.

Marquette was the center of the first iron production. During the five years following Burt's discovery of the "mountain of iron" near Teal Lake, two iron mining companies organized, a sawmill was set up to produce lumber and timbers for mine structures, the necessary charcoal-making operation had been established, ore was extracted and processed at two forges (one at nearby Carp River), and the bloom iron was laboriously hauled by oxen and horses through

the woods to the Lake Superior shore to be shipped from the newly-founded port of Marquette. Yet the Federal Census of 1850 records only 136 people in the entire county (in Alanen 1991a). At least 110 of these people were men employed by the mining companies (LaFayette 1990: 4, 5).

Populations began to inch upward over the next few years (*see* figure 4) until in 1860 Marquette County contained 2,821 people. The boom followed: 14,235 residents in 1870 (Census data in Alanen 1991a). Such expansion continued until, as noted previously, the economically disastrous decade of the 1890s.

Gender Distribution

The gender distribution of these people, however, is as significant as their numbers. Of the handful of females in Marquette in 1850 were Olive Harlow, her young daughter Ellen, and her mother Martha Bacon. They comprised the family of Amos Harlow, head of the Marquette Iron Mining Company, one of two pioneer companies in the area (Lill 1992, Harlow 1849). Mining was a man's world, so females and the family unit were rare in the early settlements. An early surveyor and mine manager on the Keweenaw, John H. Forster, mused, "'The sight of a bit of calico in those days was more thrilling than the flashing of banners'" (Thurner 1994: 49). Often only the families of company management accompanied the men into the wilderness. The general work force was male, largely transient, and unencumbered by family.

Over time, the male: female ratios approached parity, but very slowly. For example, Alanen (1991a) has calculated that in Marquette County in 1870 the ratio was 100: 68 and a decade later it had risen slightly to 100: 72. These figures are misleading, however, for gauging the male work force or the approximate numbers of families, since they include an increasing number of children whose nearly equal gender ratio off-sets the significantly wider disparity in adult ratio.

Factoring out those under seventeen, the adult gender ratio is nearer 100: 60 for 1880. Clearly, even though the female (and family) component of the population rose over time, men remained predominant in the mining regions.

Age Distribution

This was also a young population. Of the 708 people in Houghton/ Keweenaw County in 1850, 441 (over 62 percent) were between twenty and forty and an additional 150 were children up to age fifteen. One Welsh girl, sixteen when she arrived in 1866, would later remark, "'there were no grey heads in Calumet for the first few years'" (Thurner 1994: 63, 94). Lankton (1991: 111) reports that of the nineteen hundred copper mining fatalities from the beginning of the industry in the 1840s to its end in the 1960s, "the average age of death was 34, and the single most frequent age of death was just 21. Men aged 18 to 29 accounted for 41 percent of all deaths."

Iron regions showed the same trends. Data in the *1888-89 Annual Report of the Inspector of Mines* reveal that the average age of men killed in Gogebic County mines during the twelve months beginning September 1, 1888, was only twenty-nine. Most frequent age at death was twenty-one. Fewer than one-third of the fatalities were married, but all those who left widows also had children (Sell 1990).

Marital Status

Significantly, large numbers of the mining companies' workers were "single" men, both unmarried and those married men traveling in advance of their families. Dickinson County, settled in the 1870s, shows a similar growth pattern to Marquette (above). The 1880 population was 5105, concentrated in two townships where the mines were operating. By 1894, with seven townships and two cities, the county contained 14,700 residents. Although the development of cities

suggests a widening family base in the population, unmarried males outnumbered unmarried females nearly 3:2. Married men also exceeded married women (2,826 to 2,599). Only in widowhood did the female numbers rise above the male (188 and 122 respectively).

In this same census data the gender disparity becomes noticeable above age fifteen and peaks in the 30-35 age group, where the gender ratio is nearly 2:1. What this means is that in this one county alone (and at a time when the Panic of 1893 continued to be felt), there still were nearly twenty-five hundred single male adults, each requiring housing, but unlikely to provide it for himself. These men were served by the boarding system.

The numbers of single, transient male workers surged and subsided, responding to both "push" and "pull factors" inducing them to migrate to the mining region, to relocate within it, or to leave it for better opportunity. For instance, when the copper mining companies recruited large emergency crews
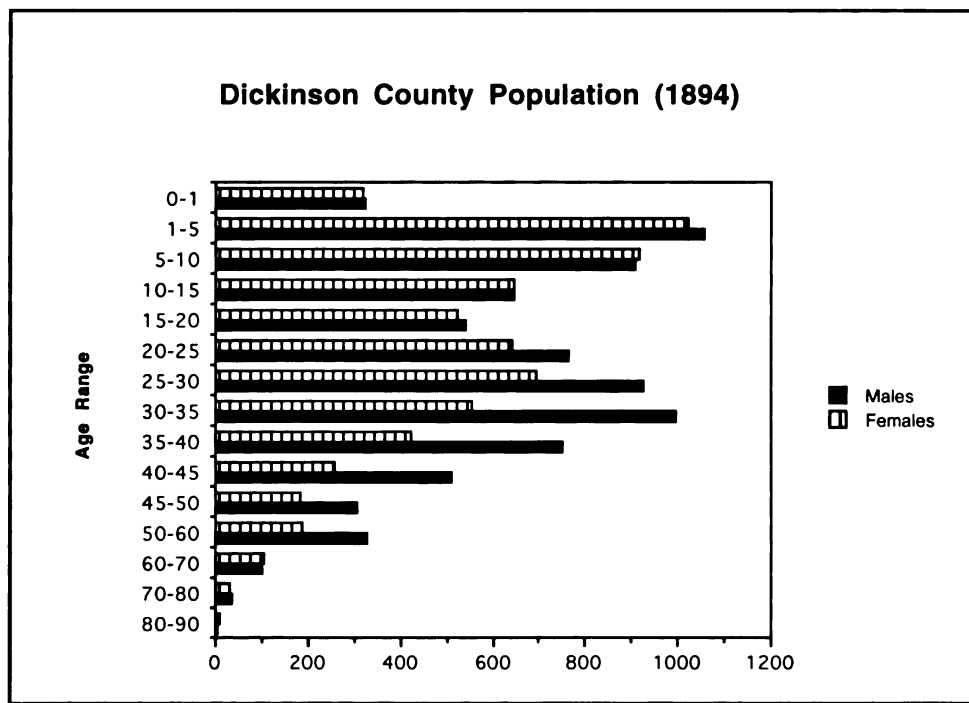
Figure 5. Dickinson County population by gender and age, 1894. (Data from Cummings 1990)

such as during the Civil War and again in the 1910s and 20s, they preferred to pay passage for workers, not families. Single men were accepted as highly mobile in an industry dependent upon flexibility. Calumet and Hecla president James MacNaughton called them "'rolling stones'" (Thurner 1994: 207). Housing them, however, especially when significant numbers arrived simultaneously, created pressure on the companies and communities. Boardinghouses became a solution (Mann 1913, Lankton and Hyde 1982).

Boarding became the solution for numerous others as well, as the rapid expansion of the frontier communities put any form of housing at a premium. Families doubled up, people lived in whatever space or type of shelter they could find (reportedly even in railroad boxcars) waiting for the housing supply to catch up with demand. Three (or more) to a bed was not uncommon.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity of the work force also played an important role in housing and overall settlement patterns. The traditional differentiation between "old immigrants" (those groups represented in the early stages of national settlement, largely northern and western Europeans and Canadians), and "new immigrants" (primarily central and eastern Europeans and Asians who dominated emigres from the 1890s onward) reveal distinct patterns of ethnic settlement in Michigan's mining region.

In all regions, American-born and the Cornish dominated in the early stages of development. As noted above, the Cornish had the technical and practical knowledge required in the mines, so they became the backbone of the industry in the field, particularly as foremen and field engineers but also as laborers. Germans, Canadians, Irish, and Italians comprised the rest of the early immigrant mix. The 1850 census of Marquette County, for example, shows only thirty-two foreign-born residents and four of the five major ethnic groups (no

Italians yet) (Alanen 1991a). Similarly, the early copper regions were dominated by the Cornish, followed by English and French Canadians (Mason 1991, Thurner 1994, Lankton and Hyde 1982).

By 1860, range of the population mix widened, but it was still dominated by people from Britain, Canada, Ireland, and Germany. Regional differentiation becomes obvious by 1870. Direct importation of Swedes and Norwegians into the Copper Country during the Civil War ironically introduced relatively few Scandinavians to that region, nor did those groups ever have large representation there. Late in the decade, however, significant numbers of Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes settled in Marquette County (Alanen 1991a).

The Finnish immigration to the mining region, especially to the Copper Country, began as a trickle in the 1870s and had become a virtual flood by 1900 (nearly 14,000 in the Upper Peninsula, 7,241 in Houghton County alone) (Thurner 1994: 141).

The late 1870s and 1880s saw the first developments on the Gogebic and Menominee Ranges, coincidental with the beginning of the "new immigration" movement. Whereas the northern regions of the peninsula acquired their ethnic mix gradually, these southern and western regions opened to settlement at the very time that the waves of central and eastern Europeans began hitting the American shores. Heavier surges of Italians were joined by Greeks, Lithuanians, Slavs, Poles, Russians, and more.

According to the *1891-92 Annual Report of the Inspector of Mines*, Gogebic County employed 4,654 men in its eighteen producing mines after less than a decade of development. Fatal mine accidents in that twelve-month period claimed men of at least ten nationalities: American (2), English (3), Irish (1), Cornish (1), Swede (5), Finn (6), Bohemian (1), Italian (3), Austrian (1), Pole (2), no data (1) (Sell 1990).

Dickinson County's 1894 state census lists residents from twenty-one specific countries including China, Australia, and the West Indies plus two ambiguous categories: "Europe" and "Other and unknown countries." Italians (870) were outnumbered only by Swedes (2,036) and English (1,176). Austria (667), Germany (442), and Russia (386) were also heavily represented (Cummings 1991: 295).

By 1910, Finns were the dominant ethnic group in Marquette County and on the Keweenaw, and Italians had become the fifth-largest group in Marquette (Alanen 1991a). Frantic recruitment efforts by the copper companies during the strike of 1913-14 tapped the "new immigrant" labor pool. "More than thirty nationalities were represented among the men hired by Calumet and Hecla, some from ethnic groups never before counted in the Keweenaw mix: Russians, Armenians, Rumanians, Slovenians, . . ." (Thurner 1994: 207). Most of these "new immigrant" groups initially were represented by unskilled laborers, single men who became boarders.

During these decades of population growth from intense immigration, ethnic separation also became evident from the household to the regional level. It was reflected in occupation and social condition and emphasized by cultural differences, particularly language, as Hardesty (1985) predicts. Therefore, *who?* and *who, when?* need also to be considered in connection with *who, when,* and *where?*

All of these factors—numbers, gender, age, marital condition, ethnicity— as well as outside factors such as demand and price of the product and job opportunities in and outside the industry had their effect on labor and its consequent housing. Boarding became a prevalent, and often the only available, housing option for residents in the mining district. It was, to use Hardesty's term, an "imported environment" with long roots in American society.

CHAPTER 3

BOARDINGHOUSES AS A FOCUS OF INVESTIGATION/
THE BOARDINGHOUSE AS AN INSTITUTION

From earliest colonial days to the first decades of the twentieth century, boardinghouses were an integral part of American society. They ranged from the simplest forms of shelter (tents, cabins, simple frame houses) for a few people, to huge brick or frame structures housing hundreds. Literally they were bed and board establishments. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) acknowledges use of the word "boardinghouse" from the 16th century as a lodging place where the boarder receives meals as one of the family for a price. The "board" in boardinghouse derives from the precursor to the dining table, a wide board on trestles. Thus "board" eventually came to mean access to the dining board, or meals provided (Hawke 1988).

Boarding was institutionalized into American culture along with countless other European influences. Withold Rubczynski (1986) traces the practice back to medieval Europe. While some European boardinghouses were quite comfortable, even posh, others were known for the rudeness of the accommodations, the landlords/ladies and the boarders. Immigrant tales often include shipboard horrors, but John Kennedy (1964:5) makes the point that for many the privation began before ever boarding ships: while waiting for passage from European ports, colonists and later immigrants endured cheap, crowded accommodation "near the quays, sleeping on straw in small, dark rooms, sometimes as many as forty in a room twelve by fifteen feet."

Boardinghouses served every stratum of the population from the ill and indigent to the wealthiest and most genteel. Not coincidentally, the heyday of the American boardinghouse (1820-1920) is also the period of greatest immigration into the developing United States. What emerged as fashionable housing in Boston, New Orleans, and San Francisco soon extended into frontier company towns. Every locale from coastal urban centers, to small towns, to isolated mining locations included boarding establishments. According to Brett Howard (1982:25), over the course of that hundred years, close to 70 percent of the American population directly experienced boardinghouse life.

An omnipresent feature of both the physical and the cultural American landscape, many boardinghouses catered to specific clientele. Besides serving the wealthy or socially prominent, select boardinghouses offered seasonal accommodation in resort areas or operated in conjunction with health spas. Others housed employees in specific occupations such as teaching, millinery, or entertainment. As the nation developed industrially and exploited its natural resources, boardinghouses became havens for displaced labor, both the local rural folk and the millions of immigrants, drawn to mills and mines far from their original homes. Thus, while boardinghouses were a common housing option in America's older and more settled cities and towns, they also became an ubiquitous link in the development of America's frontiers.

Additionally, the boardinghouse was more than just a structure. It was a prevalent social institution, center of complex economic, social, and cultural dynamics. Because it was so endemic to American life, the boardinghouse refracted as a cultural lens through which American society projected its values and stereotypes and through which we can now look back.

This study takes just such a look. The national boardinghouse era coincides with and is intimately tied to the development of northern Michigan's

mining industry. Although that fact is marginally acknowledged in numerous examinations of the growth of the region and its industry (e.g., Lankton and Hyde 1982, Alanen 1991b, 1979, Reynolds 1994), scholarship has not yet centered attention on the mining region boardinghouses, thereby leaving many avenues of social and cultural investigation unexplored. What follows begins that exploration.

Boardinghouse Life in Popular Literature and Popular History

American popular culture demonstrates the level of familiarity the boardinghouse experience held in general society. Popular literature of the past century-and-a-half, frequently distributed to mass readership as short stories and serialized novels in newspapers and magazines, abounds with examples of (primarily urban) boardinghouse life.

Novelists and short story writers draw on the boardinghouse in various ways. Some exploit the boardinghouse as a venue to juxtapose a motley variety of (occasionally) improbable characters. Examples include William Trevor's 1965 novel *The Boardinghouse* and earlier short story collections by Helen Green and A. E. Phillpotts. Green presents fifty-six stories under the collective title *At the Actor's Boardinghouse, and Other Stories* (1906) followed by the somewhat less ambitious sequel *Maison de Shine: More Stories of the Actor's Boardinghouse* (1908). Phillpotts assembles twenty-three stories, each devoted to a particular boarder, under the umbrella title *Lodgers in London* (1928).

Other writers incorporate the boardinghouse into the story to signal occupation, to reinforce class distinction, to heighten ethnicity, or to blend it so convincingly into the background that it is almost overlooked—a testament to its ubiquity. For American writers Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman ("The Hall Bedroom") and Michigan talespinner Cully Gage ("The Haunted Whorehouse"),

for instance, boardinghouses can even be the settings for good ghost stories.

Many examples of American regional literature use the boardinghouse. The American Western as genre traditionally capitalizes on the wide open range and the rough-and-tumble saloon for its settings, but frequently—at least in the background—also includes some version of the "Widder Brown's Boardin'house" where calico curtains and homemade pie represent the tamer culture of the far-away East embodied by the "Widder Brown" herself. (For a discussion of the female image in the West, *see* White 1991a.)

Midwestern boardinghouses are among the settings and background in numerous late nineteenth- and turn-of-the-century works as both population and literary foci shifted away from the East Coast and toward the Mississippi. Works of George Ade (1961), such as his witty fable "The Regular Kind of a Place and the Usual Way It Turned Out" with its wry moral "nothing ever happens in a boardinghouse," Laura Ingles Wilder's *Little House* books, and Mark Twain's nostalgic comparisons of midwestern boardinghouse life against his travel experiences illustrate the trend.

Around the turn of the century another genre of fiction, the immigrant novel (and short story), began to appear and find wide readership. Authors such as Abraham Cahan and Anzia Yezierska tell story after story of poor immigrants crammed into the Jewish ghetto of New York and their struggles to survive. These New York tenements were not boardinghouses, but the boarder as well as the boardinghouse was, as Wright (1981:125) so precisely notes, "a fact of family life." Yezierska explores the implications of taking in boarders in *The Bread Givers* (1975): a poor family of Russian Jews must decide between designating a bedroom of their cramped flat for study of the Torah or renting it out for economic survival.

Besides boarding, tenement living and lodging also were facts of life for

many urbanites by the turn of the century and the significant differences in the various forms of accommodation did not go unnoticed. A subtle but effective choice made by popular writer O. Henry (William Sidney Porter) places his alienated and isolated New Yorkers in lodging houses rather than boardinghouses, heightening their isolation by cutting his characters off from the opportunities for social interchange inherent at the boardinghouse "board." These stories appeared in his weekly humorous paper *Rolling Stones* and his collected works, notably *The Four Million* (1906).

Residents of some of the boardinghouses produced their own literature: *The Lowell Offering*, an independent magazine of the 1840s that proclaimed itself "a repository of original articles, written by 'factory girls,'" includes stories, poems, character sketches and more—frequently inspired by the authors' lives in the cotton mill boardinghouses of Lowell, Massachusetts (Eisler 1977). Around the turn of the century, residents of the Finn boardinghouses of the Pacific Northwest turned out a short-lived but prodigious flood of poems, plays, and novels celebrating their Americanization in and through the boardinghouse. "Every good play, good novel and good poem started in a boardinghouse and ended at the altar" (Mattila 1972: 5).

Two generations later and in another geographical area is John Cheever's story "Washington Boardinghouse" (*Way Some People Live* 1943). Folklorist Richard M. Dorson (1952) gathered traditional tales told in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan from boardinghouse residents there. C. G. Knoblock turned his many years of experiences working in the mining region into the popular volume *Above Below: Tales and Folklore of the Fabulous Upper Peninsula of Michigan* (1951). "Hattie's Boardinghouse" is the tale of an obstreperous boardinghouse keeper, the local curmudgeon, and their good-natured battles. Michigan novelist Joan Lindau explores the rich relationship between a midwestern girl coming of

age and her wise neighbor in *Mrs. Cooper's Boardinghouse* (1980). More recent still is Toni Cade's "Madame Bai and the Taking of Stone Mountain" (*Homeplaces* 1992), a boardinghouse story set in the modern American South.

Nor is it just American boardinghouses that figure in popular entertainment for Americans. One of the most recognized literary boardinghouse addresses is 221B Baker Street, London, home to not only a clever detective and his physician-assistant/biographer, but also the solicitous and redoubtable housekeeper, Mrs. Hudson (*see* Pritchard 1951 for character critique). Trevor and Phillpotts also house their characters in London boardinghouses, while Charles Dickens scatters his victims to boardinghouses across the British industrial landscape. Katherine Mansfield employs European boardinghouses as settings for several of her works: "Pension Séguin" (1924) in France and a collection titled *In a German Pension* (1926). In *Dubliners* (1926), James Joyce presents a boarder maneuvered into marriage to the landlady's daughter.

American popular history, including legend and lore of the famous and notorious, has also been linked to boardinghouses. Wallis Simpson's "Aunt Bessie" was proprietress of a fashionable boardinghouse in Baltimore. Boston culinary queen Fannie Farmer developed her expertise in the kitchen of the Farmer family's boardinghouse (Howard 1982), and her recipe book became an American standard. Annually tens of thousands of visitors from around the world visit the Sarah Jordan boardinghouse, now at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. This modest structure housed Thomas Edison's research staff at Menlo Park, New Jersey.

Among the notorious associated with boardinghouses is Mary Surratt, executed as a conspirator in Lincoln's assassination, the plot allegedly contrived in her establishment. James Earl Ray reportedly lived in several boardinghouses in Birmingham, Memphis, and Toronto while he planned the assassination of

Martin Luther King, Jr., which he then carried out from the Memphis boarding-house where he was residing on April 5, 1968.

Besides swelling local police and court records, managers and residents of boardinghouses of ill-repute have been known to engender scandalous tales—and even occasional folk heroes. For example, in a twist on the usual miners-in-the-bawdy-house story, in 1880, the men of Fayette, Michigan, became local heroes when they stormed a nearby saloon/brothel and freed a young woman involuntarily drafted into the trade (LaFayette 1977: 45).

Boardinghouses in the Comics

The comic pages of American newspapers provide yet more evidence of the ubiquitous boardinghouse in American life and some of the stereotypes it spawned. Cartoonist Gene Ahern created *Our Boardinghouse* in September, 1921, and three months later introduced the character that would become the mainstay of the strip, the harumphing braggart, Major Hoople. Hoople and his wife Martha, the formidable landlady of the boardinghouse ("her 'no' . . . was, as she put it, 'as final as a cobra's bite!'") (Goulart 1990) maintained the house and pro-vided the central plot themes involving a string of assorted bachelor tenants (Ahern 1921-36). The comic was longer-lasting than the lifestyle it portrayed: boardinghouses were already in decline in the 20s; the comic was last published in 1981.

A similar boardinghouse-based comic was *Room and Board*, created in 1928 by Sal Bostwick but drawn by Ahern after Bostwick's death. Fizzbeak Inn, man-aged by the portly Mrs. Fizzbeak and inhabited by young fellows with humor-ous courtship woes, was the original setting. Ahern's format involved another diverse band of boarders at odds with the landlady and her windbag husband, in this case a Judge Puffle. Though not as successful as *Our Boardinghouse, Room*

and Board ran to 1953 (Goulart 1990). Both undoubtedly touched the memories as well as the funnybones of many Americans who had themselves lived for some time in a boardinghouse.

Yet a third popular comic from the 20s is *Moon Mullins,* whose boorish central character "moved permanently into a boardinghouse run by a scrawny, vain spinster named Emmy Schmaltz, and from then on that became the base of operations of the strip" (Goulart 1990).

Scholarly Boardinghouse Studies

Interest in boardinghouses and boardinghouse life transcends the level of popular culture, however. Scholarly examinations of boardinghouses as physical or cultural elements of their environment have included examples in England, Canada, and Australia as well as America. Development and influence of the American boardinghouse came under scrutiny primarily at the turn of the century, when the institution was in decline and social reform on the rise, and again in recent decades under the spur of social and labor history and gender and family studies. Scholarship ranges widely across the disciplines including industrial history, urban planning and cultural geography, historical and industrial archaeology, material culture, family history and sociology, history of science and technology, immigrant studies, economics, labor history, art and architectural history, diet and health, and women's studies. A comprehensive bibliography of materials directly and collaterally related to boardinghouses would constitute a volume much larger than the one at hand. A sampling of works directly relevant to this boardinghouse project, however, indicates in part the range and direction of this scholarship.

A number of works consider boardinghouses within the larger context of company housing. Morris Knowles' *Industrial Housing* (1920) derives from

World War I era federal demographic studies and housing guidelines. A complementary study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Magnusson 1920) describes communities and facilities and tabulates numbers of housing units and types in the various urban and remote industrial regions in post-war America. In considering the linkage between workplace and employee housing as a community-building dynamic, James Vance (1966) traces the formation of mill towns in England and New England.

The Waltham system and the Lowell boardinghouses have generated considerable attention. Examples of studies which link the architectural and cultural dimensions include Horwitz's (1973) consideration of residents' perceptions of "house" versus "home" and the prodigious *Interdisciplinary Investigations of the Boot Mills, Lowell, Massachusetts* (Beaudry and Mrozowski, eds.) undertaken by the National Park Service. Of particular interest are volume 1, *Life at the Boarding Houses: A Preliminary Report* (1987) and volume 3, *The Boardinghouse System as a Way of Life* (1989).

Additional studies that place the boardinghouse into the context of company housing include James B. Allen's *The Company Town in the American West* (1983) and Randall Rohe's 1985 study "Lumber Company Towns in Wisconsin." Both illustrate the regional approach, whereas James S. Garner (1992) takes a global view of both company towns and boardinghouses with an investigation that includes the Americas (South and North), Europe and Australia. His consideration of company housing in the U.S. includes the Western mining regions and the whole of New England, not just Lowell.

The "mill girls" have generated considerable interest, but so too have women associated with boardinghouses in other capacities. Leonore Davidoff (1979) and Joan Jensen (1980) discuss the economics of landladies operating boardinghouses in England and America, respectively. Margaret Byington's

1908 case-study of Homestead, Pennsylvania, includes important data on board-inghouse family economics. Urban female boarders also provide the focus of studies, some government-sponsored with an eye to reform such as Mary S. Ferguson (1898) and Girls Housing Council of San Francisco (1927). In contrast, Lisa M. Fine (1986) takes an historical look at early twentieth-century women residents in one of Chicago's popular Eleanor Association residences.

Family dynamics in a boarding household have also received attention. Geoffrey Guest (1989) details "Boarding of the Dependent Poor in Colonial America." Stuart M. Blumin (1975) looks at families with boarders in upper New York. An often-cited article in family studies as well as boardinghouse research is "Urbanization and the Malleable Household: An Examination of Boarding and Lodging in American Families" (Hareven and Modell 1973). Related are considerations of ethnic as well as family dynamics, such as Walter Matilla's 1972 study of collective housing among the Finns and A. Ross McCormack's look at Canadian boardinghouse acculturation networks (1984).

The few discussions devoted to Michigan boardinghouses derive largely from personal experience in a specific house or locale in the copper (Nicholls 1968), lumber (Bourke 1982), or iron regions (Knuth 1992). Preliminary reports of archaeological work at an iron smelting site include data on boarding facilities there (Martin 1993, 1994). One very useful but narrowly-focused study is Sarah McNear's (1978) "Quincy Mining Company: Housing and Community Services, c. 1860-1931," produced as part of a larger project of the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER).

During the reform mania of the turn of the century, housing other than the idealized nuclear single-family/single dwelling arrangement came under close scrutiny and criticism. Urban boardinghouses, associated in the public mind with overcrowding, immigrants, and decaying morality, acquired a

disreputable status mitigated only slightly by the even less desirable alternatives of lodging and rooming houses, residential hotels, and other and sundry forms of "cheap furnished rooms." Single-city examinations of boardinghouse function and decline include Franklin K. Fretz (1912) on Philadelphia and Fred R. Johnson (1910) on Minneapolis. The most comprehensive is *The Lodging House Problem in Boston* (Wolfe 1906), yet another contemporary study of the urban situation now documented from a wider and more current perspective in Paul Erling Groth's 1983 dissertation "Forbidden Housing: The Evolution and Exclusion of Hotels, Boarding Houses, Rooming Houses, and Lodging Houses in American Cities, 1880-1930."

Other important recent explorations into the evolution of the urban boardinghouse as social adaptation include Peel (1986) for America and Richard Harris (1992) for Canada, particularly Toronto. Richard Pillsbury (1990) turns his attention to the "board," tracing the evolution of the American restaurant from the kitchens and dining rooms of boardinghouses. Avoiding both indictment and apology, Wright (1981) focuses on housing, including the boardinghouse, as reflection and instrument of American ideology, and Howard (1982) demonstrates through statistics and example the extent of "The Boardinghouse Reach."

From just this short listing it should be clear that boardinghouses served multiple and varied functions, that these and the social reaction toward them changed with time, and that the boardinghouses themselves were of various types. Thus the term "boardinghouse" is slippery, meaning something in one time and place, something quite different in another. To further complicate the issue, various and distinct housing terminology such as "lodging house," "boardinghouse," "tenement," "tavern," "inn," and "hotel" has been used interchangeably often enough in community directories, news accounts, source indices, and even by proprietors to demand very careful attention by the

researcher. Both the buildings and the social institution included in this study conform to the *OED* definition of boardinghouse, based upon all available evidence. Nevertheless, all the variety of examples available suggest the necessity of organizing them to facilitate study. One way to categorize boardinghouses is by their function and the nature of their residents. Doing so also produces a loose chronology of types.

Colonial Boardinghouses as "Dumping Grounds" for the Aged, Ill, and Unwanted

Besides accommodating friends and extended family, American colonial households regularly boarded the infirm and destitute. According to Guest (1989), rather than an example of Christian charity, the practice was reluctantly undertaken by host families and only with considerable financial inducement from the public coffers.

Community expectations of the time dictated that aged, ill, and disabled slaves or live-in employees were the social and economic responsibility of their masters/employers. Likewise, families were expected to maintain their own poor and elderly relations. Those proportionately few who needed care and economic relief but had no family became the responsibility of the community at large. Until the numbers of such people justified establishing public institutions, they received help in one of two ways. If they remained in their own homes, the county court ordered home relief ranging from remittance of taxes to meager pensions; those who needed physical care as well were boarded at community expense, generally in middle class or wealthy homes.

Guest makes three significant observations about this system relevant to the study at hand. First, the boarding arrangement was usually not voluntarily undertaken by the householder, but court ordered. When circumstances demanded immediate relief for an individual between court sessions, private

arrangements could be made but were predicated on the householder's expectation that the court would formalize the arrangement and make payment.

Second, "despite the fact that the needs of the county pensioners, many of whom were also incapacitated, were not significantly different from the needs of the paupers who were boarded, householders who kept paupers received substantially greater allowances." This greater allowance was necessary to induce householders to take on the onerous demands of this boarding arrangement. Court records used by Guest suggest some of the boarded paupers were mentally unstable, even dangerous. Their physical conditions ranged from loss of sight, hearing, and speech to total incontinence and included "rotting flesh" (suggesting anything from bedsores to gangrene) and illnesses sometimes transmitted (even fatally) to members of the host family. It seems no amount of payment was enough for some householders who ejected their boarders after a few months: numerous paupers were relocated four or five times before they succumbed, and stays of a year in one place were rare.

Third, the numbers of potential boarders were very small (perhaps only two or three individuals per community) and that small population was the reason for the dispersed boarding arrangement rather than a community-financed central care facility.

Thus, in the colonial case, boarding the unrelated dependent poor was a court-administered extension of family or employer responsibility toward the indigent and infirm. Its perceived necessity was linked to small numbers of candidates for boarding. Host families, already economically stable, clearly did not seek what they considered a distasteful social obligation for the payment and, in fact, often ejected a boarder and then refused to ever take another. Rising population density naturally led to increased numbers of community dependents, the accommodation of which in poor houses and the like ended the demand for this form of boardinghouse.

Homes for the Urban Genteel

Middle class urban populations of the early nineteenth century expanded both in numbers and social expectations. High social status and genteel living became the goals of many urbanites. Ironically against the earlier colonial situation, these later boardinghouses provided a means for many of the aspiring to live the "good life."

Boardinghouses already existed in American cities to house workers. Wright (1981:37) notes, however, that "by the 1830s, boardinghouse life had become rather prevalent among well-to-do young men and women in American cities." Young married couples, especially, enjoyed boarding in posh surroundings without the costs and responsibilities of setting up their own households, hiring servants, etc.

Unmarried gentlemen also found the fashionable urban boardinghouse an attractive housing alternative. For the young dandy, it offered independence from his parents but not from family services in a pleasant social context. Retired gentlemen, bachelors, or widowers appreciated the family comforts and companionship of the boardinghouse without the domestic demands. For proper unmarried women living away from the family, the boardinghouse offered a respectable and home-like alternative. It would be this particular quality of the genteel urban boardinghouse, its ability to offer the pleasant side of domesticity without the demands of householding, that fed the reformers' cries against this form of housing (Wolfe 1906, Wright 1981, Groth 1983).

Occupational/Seasonal Havens

While boardinghouses offered an attractive alternative form of home to the well-to-do urbanites, they served many more residents of the lower and middle classes as havens, as homes-away-from home. For instance, health-conscious

folk flocked to spas and resorts and tuberculosis patients were frequently trundled off to pest houses, taking up temporary but often long-term residence in boardinghouses dedicated to their accommodation. In other instances, the lure of jobs in far-off locations or occupations that demanded periodic relocation brought people more and more to seek out boardinghouses as home-like havens.

As the well-documented Waltham "experiment" of the 1830s-40s demonstrated, boardinghouses and American labor were to become symbiotic. Certain situations and conditions made it advantageous or even necessary that companies house their workers. In other situations, workers had a choice of accommodations, but boarding provided distinct advantages, particularly to individuals relocating for a specific occupation or couples whose occupation kept them on the move (stage performers, for instance).

Economy and efficiency were obvious inducements to boarding. Sharing a house eliminated the need for expensive duplication of household goods, and the household chores shifted to the housekeeper. Companionship, as opposed to the anonymity of hotel residence, was another apparent plus. Shared experiences on the job provided a bond between residents. In 1805, for example, the New York City directory designated 10 percent (twenty-six) of its boarding establishments as specifically "sailor" boardinghouses (Pillsbury 1990: 20).

Moreover, if all the boarders worked for the same employer, or at least in the same occupation, they would likely have a common and consistent schedule, facilitating the regular mealtimes and other chore schedules necessary for efficient boardinghouse management. Hence, numerous boardinghouses became occupation-specific; those operated by employers were necessarily so.

Many also were gender-specific. Often the traditional link between occupation and gender made the determination. Facilities for teachers or clerical workers, who could be either gender, generally took in either men or women,

but not both. Boardinghouses designated for milliners housed women. Other houses accommodated only shop or mill girls. Boardinghouses designated for women generally also served public morals. House managers at Lowell, for instance, were expected to be as conscientious toward restricting the activities and acquaintances of their residents as they were toward minding the kitchen and the laundry (Wright 1981, Eisler 1977, Beaudry and Mrozowski 1987, 1989). Nearly a century later, the Eleanor Clubs of Chicago functioned as half-way houses to integrate single young women living away from their families safely and respectably into the less-restrictive (and therefore more potentially dangerous) urban white-collar business world (Fine 1986).

Male-only boardinghouses also occurred in various occupational contexts. Small-scale design or manufacturing operations frequently centered around a tradesman and his apprentices, whom he housed. Edison's research team at the Jordan boardinghouse comprised an all-male enclave. Centers of mining and heavy manufacturing, dominated by large male work forces, spawned dense concentrations of male-only boardinghouses.

Industrialization and concomitant immigration and urbanization during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries created tremendous shortfalls in housing, further necessitating boarding. In the century between 1820 and 1920, the national population increased more than 1000 percent, exceeding 105 million. Thirty-three million were immigrants (Howard 1982). Numerous studies indicate that during the explosive growth period 1850 to 1930, between 15 and 20 percent of private homes in the central and northeastern U.S. accommodated boarders (Alanen 1991b, Howard 1982, Hareven and Modell 1973, Blumin 1975), while company boardinghouses sprang up from coast to coast to house workers in mills and mines, furnaces and factories, giving new significance to the phrase "boardinghouse reach."

Most of these workers were men alone, either unmarried or working far from their families—exactly the type of labor force that developed Michigan's copper and iron industries. For example, Ishpeming's 1870 census shows 755 boarders, 20 percent of the population, distributed within ninety-four houses. These boarders plus the 450 family members in those homes comprised nearly one-third (32 percent) of Ishpeming's residents (Alanen 1991a). Thus, the development of Michigan's mining industry coincides with and is intimately tied to the national boardinghouse era.

Quite unlike the colonial situation, boarding was a popular living arrangement during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for members of all social classes. Boarders sought or accepted the arrangement as a generally positive—or at least necessary—housing alternative, one that they chose for the advantages boarding gave them personally or which they accepted within the context of another choice they had made, usually relating to employment. Also in contrast to the colonial situation, most householders who took in boarders did so by choice and for profit.

Economic Types of Boardinghouses

The economic basis of boardinghouse operation also serves as a means of categorizing them. There are three basic economic types of boardinghouse with

Table 2. Economic types of boardinghouses.

Boardinghouse Type	Operator	Number of Boarders	Profit to
Company	Independent manager	20-300	Manager
Private Commercial	Owner/manager	5-50	Owner
Privately-owned House	Owner householder	1-20	Householder
Company Rental House	Rental householder	1-20	Householder

a composite fourth: each flourished on the Michigan mining frontier. Basic types were the company boardinghouse, the private home, and the private commercial enterprise. The fourth form occurred when a householder, him- or herself a tenant in a company-owned house, took in boarders.

Company Accommodation

Company boardinghouses were financed and built by a company for its employees. In the Lowell, Massachusetts, area early in the nineteenth century, company boardinghouses were built by the textile mill companies for the hundreds of relocated farm girls who comprised the mill work force in the industrial towns. Over the next century numerous other companies also built worker housing, generally necessitated because private housing was not available in the locale of the workplace. Magnusson (1920) notes the particular necessity of company-supplied housing for industries tied to remote and isolated sources of raw materials and/or where the temporary nature of the community discouraged others from building.

Almost invariably, company boardinghouses were intended for unmarried workers or those living on their own. Some enterprises, such as mining coal, iron, copper, or gold, drew hundreds of single workers into remote areas. Company boardinghouses supplied their housing needs.

The company hired a manager-housekeeper for the facility and customarily subsidized its operation. Boarding charges were typically deducted from the workers' wages and distributed to the boarding-house manager who was responsible for buying supplies, cooking, cleaning, keeping up with domestic chores such as gardening and tending livestock, keeping the records, and enforcing the rules of the house. Managers commonly came to the job as a way of

assuring room and board for themselves, rather than for substantial disposable income.

Boarding in Single-Family Homes

Individual householders also took in boarders, primarily to augment family income. Many women, particularly widows, took advantage of the opportunity to capitalize on their domestic skills—hence the "Widder Brown" stereotype. Yet spinsters and married women of all ages opened their homes to people for a price. Moreover, some private boardinghouse proprietors laid the table for extra diners—folks who slept elsewhere but who took a specified meal or more daily at a convenient boardinghouse (Bond 1987, Groth 1983, Pillsbury 1990, Wakefield 1917-32).

A composite of company housing and the private home boardinghouse occurred when workers residing in company-built family housing (single houses or duplexes rented monthly from the company) were highly motivated or even mandated by company policy to take in other workers as boarders. Householders were therefore simultaneously tenants and landlords. In this situation the decisions of whether to accommodate boarders and who they would be were assumed by the company, but the economic advantages were shared between company and employee-householder. The company was spared the financial commitment of constructing yet more housing; the householder kept the board payments. In essence, these family homes amounted to secondary company boardinghouses.

Private Commercial Boardinghouses

The third economic type of boardinghouse was the commercial enterprise, a boardinghouse owned and operated privately for a profit, as opposed to an extension of an industry's overhead or a source of householder's extra income.

Such endeavors generally differed from the private home boardinghouse in the proportion of household income expected from the operation and the formality of the business aspect. Private home boardinghouses took in as few as one boarder and the income, no matter how necessary, seems generally to have been treated as supplementary income to make ends meet or to build a family nest-egg for future investment. Commercial boardinghouses were a dedicated business, providing the family livelihood.

That a commercial boarding establishment might be part of a saloon under the same management and advertised only as saloon, or that in individual cases the boarders in a private home might supply the sole economic resources of the householders, only serves to blur the distinction between these two boardinghouse types in the private sector. This point has proved troublesome for other researchers as well (Davidoff 1979).

Each of these economic boardinghouse types was significantly represented on the Michigan mining frontier and is discussed below.

Issues Addressed by Boardinghouse Studies

Although the studies of Michigan mining area boardinghouses are few and narrowly focused, issues and ideas pertinent to other boardinghouse studies suggest approaches or points of comparison for this Michigan study.

Studies of the urban boardinghouse, both those for the genteel resident and for the worker, suggest class and occupation as important themes. The "lodging-house problem" draws attention 1) to the changing function of the boardinghouse in urban societies, particularly as house populations became increasingly comprised of immigrants; 2) to American housing evolution in general; and 3) to attitudes reflected by both the physical and the social institution of the boardinghouse.

The company boardinghouse suggests explorations into paternalism and invites inter-regional and inter-industry comparisons. Comparisons between urban and frontier boardinghouses and the role of the boardinghouse in the frontier settlement follow from the fact that many company boardinghouses and indeed entire company towns were the "product of industrial isolation" (Magnusson 1920: 19). Further, the heavy concentration of immigrant labor in boardinghouses points to their potential as foci of American acculturation or, as cosmopolitan frontier theory suggests, ethnic havens.

American boardinghouses exhibit a wide and complex variety of sizes, architectural styles, natures of residents, and locales, as well as deriving from three different economic patterns. This variety, plus the fact that any or even all of these factors could change in a single boardinghouse or in a group of them, suggests a wide range of adaptability for both the physical and the social institution relative to surrounding conditions.

Issues with a more personal perspective focus on the residents of the boardinghouses, their roles in the household and community, and their perceptions of their own situation. One central consideration is how the disparate residents of a boardinghouse developed their roles, made somewhat indistinct because managers were sometimes tenants themselves, or because boarders could go literally overnight from being a boarder to being a manager. A concomitant consideration, raised by Horwitz (1973) in his study of Lowell, is the perceptual fit between the built environment of the boardinghouse and the residents' notions of "home."

A myriad of issues concern the family relationship in the boardinghouse, from questions of privacy to questionable influences on children. Furthermore, the definition of boardinghouse suggests fluid notions of "family" ("boarder . . .

as one of the family . . ."), despite the fundamental business nature of the association.

That business relationship, also emphasized by the *OED* definition (". . . for a price"), particularly invites investigation because of the extensive scope of boardinghouse enterprise and of the high proportion of women earners involved (a group of earners often overlooked in economic studies).

Finally, as in any study that seeks the details of everyday life, there is the opportunity to encounter the "why" as well as the "what" of human behavior in the most intimate of contexts, the household.

Boarding on the Michigan Mining Frontier

Without doubt, boarding became intrinsic to the Michigan mining frontier, where each of the economic types flourished. Thousands of separate boardinghouses offered bed and board and social connection to their residents, whether one, hundreds, or some number in between. Since the mining companies were the instigating force behind settlement of the mineral ranges, it is necessary to begin this study with the role of companies as community builders to understand how and to what effect the boardinghouse, and housing in general, was used by the companies in and for their corporate development.

CHAPTER 4

THE MINING COMPANIES AS COMMUNITY BUILDERS/ CONTROLLERS

Prior to the industrial revolution, home and workplace were one and the same, or nearly so. Looms occupied living space, and kilns, cooperages, and anvils often lay but a few paces from the family hearth. Industrialization effectively divorced the home from the recognized workplace, giving rise to the problem of joining adequate labor forces with the factory or other industrial center. When possible, factory siting took advantage of labor availability, but resource-dependency for power and/or raw materials frequently required industries to situate far from adequate labor supplies. The early English response to the problem of staffing textile mills was to employ whole families and to erect cottages for them near the workplace, creating what geographers term an "economic landscape" (Vance 1966).

By the beginning of the nineteenth century and the trend toward a segmented work force, company management preferred boardinghouses for groups of individual workers. After all, it reasoned, why should the company construct and maintain housing for whole families when several members of the household were non-employees—or worse yet, someone else's employees? This philosophy, plus the physical necessity to locate New England's early textile mills near sources of waterpower, led to importing a work force of spinsters from throughout the region and housing them in boarding facilities near the mills. Workrooms in the upper story of the brick boarding blocks at Lowell re-married

worker housing to workplace (Knowles 1920, Vance 1966, Garner 1992.)

Company-supplied housing, in particular cases even company-created communities, became common through the nineteenth century as an effective means to attract adequate numbers of laborers to remote industrial centers (Magnusson 1920, Allen 1983). Boardinghouses proved particularly efficient for housing numerous employees and therefore they proliferated. On the other hand, workers with families were believed to be a more loyal and stable labor force, thus providing a strong argument for companies to also build family homes for recruited workers. What was generally a convenience in urban centers, however, became truly necessary in unsettled regions.

Mining Company Settlements in Michigan

Specific form(s) of boarding operation existed in or predominated relative to settlement type. Basically, four types of settlement arose on the Michigan mining ranges. Three of these, the location, the company town, and the model town, all stood on company land and were controlled by company policies. Boarding occurred in multiple venues subject to varying degrees of company control. The fourth settlement type, the townsite, grew from private enterprise on privately-owned, not company-owned land. In this private sector, boarding was free of company jurisdiction, though not completely beyond its influence.

Spatially, these settlements were distributed according to the gradient outlined by Lewis (1984). Locations by necessity were linked to entrepots—sometimes directly, sometimes through intermediate supply sites. They were the most peripheral outposts in the system. Towns and even a few cities, by virtue of their commercial districts, served as those intermediate supply sites. Entrepots were those few communities that linked the frontier with national and international markets. Placement determined an entrepot more than settlement size. Because the Great Lakes were the key to transporting both in-coming

supplies (and labor) and out-going products, entrepots developed along the Lake Superior south shore and along Green Bay.

Table 3. Frontier settlement types

Settlement Type	Characteristics	Gradient Function	Example
Location	Company-owned Company-controlled Little or no commercial	Residential/mineral processing camp	Austin
Company town	Company-owned Company-controlled Limited commercial	Intermediate supply	South Range
Model town	Professionally designed and planned Company-controlled Limited commercial	Intermediate supply	Gwinn
Townsite	Private enterprise Private ownership	Intermediate supply Entrepot	Iron Mountain Marquette

Thus with the exception of the few coastal entrepots such as Marquette, Eagle Harbor, Escanaba, and Ontonagon, Thurner's (1994: 64) succinct observation on the Copper Country is equally true for the Great Lakes iron regions: "Mines, not harbors, determined location of settlements and towns." Between the 1840s and early 1900s as each successive strike stimulated new mining activity, the pattern repeated: explorers' camp gave way to organized mining settlement in a remote and usually isolated tract of rugged wilderness. By necessity, mining companies created the first settlements in these regions. Initially, the community-building was primarily physical and needs-based, firmly grounded in the practice of boarding. After a time, however, companies recognized numerous management goals linked to their settlements quite apart from merely

supplying the basics of food and shelter to their employees. These new company policies also affected boarding.

Mine Site Accommodations

Accommodations in the exploration camps were crude and rudimentary, but consistent with expectations for the situation. Temporary shelter or camping in the open was the general rule: Sprague and his small team on the Keweenaw (above) shared two hastily-built bark-covered cabins in 1845 (St. John 1976; Monette 1977); Chapter VII of the *Geological Survey of Michigan for the Upper Peninsula 1869-1873*, Volume I, Part I, lists camping supplies and explains in detail tent designs and woodcraft practices necessary for prospectors (Cummings 1991). Milwaukee Iron Company chemist Nelson Hulst was hired in about 1870 to determine whether the first ore discoveries on the eastern Menominee Range would merit development and justify bringing a railroad into the region. The evaluation required two years' study, during which he had to haul all supplies and equipment sixty miles from Menominee through deep forests into the interior wilderness (Dulan 1978: 3).

Once a property demonstrated mineable ore, the company moved quickly to establish its physical plant, including housing for the workers. The extreme isolation of the region especially in winter when the Great Lakes froze, plus the remoteness of the individual mine sites, demanded that the companies provide every necessity for the mine operations and their employees. A tally of supplies that had to be shipped in to see those at the Quincy Mine through the winter of 1865-66 illustrates the enormity of the task:

> twenty-four hundred barrels of flour, two hundred of pork, three hundred and fifty of beef, fifty of herring, and five hundred barrels of smoking tobacco. . . . Ten thousand pounds of lard and of dried apples twelve thousand, butter forty-eight thousand, sugar sixty-five thousand, tea forty-five hundred, coffee six thousand, rice twenty-five hundred, and

twelve thousand pounds of soap. [Also] ten thousand kegs of [blasting] powder, three thousand feet of fuse, sixty thousand pounds of tallow, and eight hundred pounds of candles for miners to wear [on their] helmets underground. [Additional supplies included] 120 axes, seventy-five tons of coal, and blacking, bluing, needles, clothespins, baking powder, con densed milk, and snuff. [Green vegetables and potatoes were raised locally; hay and grain were already in storage.] (Thurner 1994: 74-75)

Corporate-sponsored settlements arose throughout the region. Nevertheless, the desolation brought one pioneer to express the thoughts of untold others when he said, "Goodbye God, I'm going to the Iron Range" (from Eastman in Alanen 1982: 101).

At the physical heart of a mine site stood the shaft house, hoist house, ore processing facilities, company offices, equipment and materials storage, black-smith and carpenter buildings, barns and tool sheds, and at least one large boardinghouse. One or two homes were usually provided for mine captains or supervisors and their families. In most cases these homes and the company boardinghouses were not only the singular housing resource for the first workers at a mine, but the only housing for anyone for miles. A general store and medical facility—dispensary or hospital—were recognized as additional necessities, and a change house or "dry" also became a standard feature.

Stamp mills, smelters, and lumber mills show much the same pattern: a tight cluster of industrial structures, auxiliary buildings such as carpenter and blacksmith shops, supervisors' quarters, and a boardinghouse or two (Lankton and Hyde 1982, LaFayette 1977, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Victoria Site Plan).

Many examples of these early company settlements could be found on the Keweenaw. Beginning his missionary assignment to the Keweenaw in the early 1840s, Rev. John H. Pitizel recorded his observations of the mining settlements he served. Of the newly-built Cliff Mine Location, Pitizel (1990: 214:15) stressed the

rudimentary manner in which initial settlement needs were met while foreseeing the pattern of later settlement development:

> Some of the dwellings are tolerably comfortable, but not built with regard to convenience, or external neatness or order. Necessity has been the rule, and was a good one to begin with. But the Company has opened on a rich treasure, and will probably be disposed to bestow more taste on their future improvements.

In its initial year (1855-56) the Eagle River Mining Company extracted silver and copper ore at its mine site and also erected three boardinghouses, three other dwellings, a stable, a blacksmith shop, two bridges, and had begun construction of a dam meant to power a proposed eight-head stamp mill. The land cleared for the mining and building operation, about eight acres, had been put under cultivation and produced "oats, hay, potatoes, turnips, and [other] vegetables" (Monette 1978b: 72-76).

Mindful of the costs (both actual and potential) of their isolation, effective mining ventures worked to increase a settlement's self-sufficiency and stability. With Great Lakes shipping suspended each winter, starvation was an annual threat. More than one community ran out of supplies before the first boats of spring arrived or because a supply ship was wrecked (Worth 1956, Murdoch 1943: 59-67, Monette 1976: 36).

The situation at Eagle Harbor would have been even more desperate during the winter of 1860 if the townsfolk had not been able to secure emergency rations. In November the warehouse storing all the supplies for the town and local mining operations caught fire and then exploded when a store of black powder ignited. The shipping season was ending and no local settlement could spare supplies. Only through the desperate efforts of the warehouse proprietor did the people survive. He trekked all the way to Detroit to find a ship and supplies, and at that, part of the emergency shipment was lost overboard as the

rescue ship encountered a fierce November storm on Lake Superior (Monette 1977: 30-31).

Therefore, the agricultural resources at Eagle River were far from unique. In 1860, for example, the Minesota Mining Company "raised 13,484 bushels of potatoes, 2,150 bushels of turnips, 100 bushels of oats, and 150 tons of hay" to supplement imported supplies at its Ontonagon County operation (Bebeau 1947), and most mining households (including boardinghouses) well into the twentieth century kept a cow and a few chickens and grew a kitchen garden.

Housing also demanded a great deal of attention from the mining companies. As mining agent for the Great Western Mining Company, Thomas W. Buzzo reported to the Pittsburgh investors:

> We are getting our homes in shape for the better accommodation of our men. We find in order to keep good men that it is necessary to provide comfortable accommodations for them. — This we are doing as fast as we can without going into a great expense, or providing anything that is unnecessary, . . . We have a comfortable log house just built that will accommodate say 15 men with ease. Another of the same kind will be ready in two weeks. A third dwelling will be necessary. . . . They will enable us to work a very respectable force. . . . (Buzzo to Cooper, 18 May, 1863)

Boardinghouses had numerous advantages in the initial stage of mine development. Although larger than a single-family home, building one was far less expensive in labor and materials than constructing small individual cabins to accommodate the same number of men.

With so much to be accomplished in the early months of mine operation, and with a relatively small work force to accomplish it all, boardinghouse living also represented significant and vital labor-saving. Housing a dozen or more men under a single roof meant that time-consuming domestic chores could be assumed by a minimal number of individuals, therefore allotting more

man-hours to potentially profit-making endeavors. As Christine Delphy (1984: 97) has noted, "a 'normal' day's work is that of a person who does not have to do his own domestic work."

If necessary, one of the male laborers would cook and manage the boardinghouse, but companies quickly sought to make other arrangements. Husband-and-wife teams, wives of miners, or women alone managed the houses through an arrangement with the company. In an earlier report, Buzzo had assured those Pittsburgh investors: "A house has been fitted up sufficient to accommodate ten to twelve men, and a man with his family has moved into it for the purpose of boarding the hands" (Buzzo to Cooper, 23 April, 1863).

Moreover, although family men might be preferable as a stable work force at a mine with long-range prospects, at even a promising mine a core of single laborers represented considerable flexibility to the company's overhead. Once the initial investment for the boardinghouse and its furnishings had been incurred, operating expenses could easily adjust to the demand. During slack times, a reduced number of residents meant less taken in for room and board, but also fewer meals and less laundry. Boom periods enticed hoards of men to come to the mines for work, and during such times double-shifting, both in the mines and in the boardinghouse beds, became the typical response.

Necessity dictated not only that boardinghouses be built as part of the initial mine complex, but that they and the other necessary housing be placed close to the work site. Michigan's mines were invariably established in inhospitable terrain, high craggy or deeply forested places. Roads, if they existed at all, were often little more than twin ruts created by the wagons, loaded with in-coming supplies or out-going ore, that jounced their way periodically between the mine complex and a larger and distant settlement. Foot travel was the most practical way to get about at the work site, even in a region where three hundred inches of

snow annually (and skis and snowshoes) were not uncommon.

Moreover, the surface distance between home and mine head was only part of the distance to the actual workplace. In the early decades of mining without mechanical lift systems, ladders linked the mine with the surface. For example, at the Quincy Copper Mine in the decade prior to 1866, before a miner's paid workday began he had as much as an hour's descent, rung by rung, into the depths to reach his workplace. Then, after ten hours in the mine, another hour of climbing to reach the surface (Lankton and Hyde 1982: 22). As far as he was concerned, the closer his dinner and bed were from that point, the better.

Housing the men close to the operations suited the company as well. Frequent emergencies at the mines and processing sites included floods, fire, and cave-ins. At such times all available hands needed to be readily available to assist. Among other reasons cited by companies for building employee housing close to the mines was that close proximity of the men facilitated timely communication between the company and the workers (Magnusson 1920: 19, 21).

Therefore, a company boardinghouse built in the early stages of the development of a mine or stamping mill operation usually stood within a few hundred feet of the main industrial buildings. Placement of the initial boardinghouse in relation to the few single-family homes constructed for supervisory personnel, the doctor, or other high-ranking individuals varied with the individual site and in some instances even changed over time, as cave-ins and continuing mine development made building relocations occasionally necessary. On the other hand, the companies generally reinforced economic status, ethnic separation, and other social markers through the built environment they created.

Company Settlements—the "Locations"

Boardinghouses were not the sole housing provided by the companies, nor were they the only boarding facilities under company control on the mining ranges. Contrary to practice in other industrial regions in the nation, Great Lakes mining companies constructed very few company towns. Instead, to attract and hold those desirable workers with families, companies built clusters of single-family and duplex houses, forming hundreds of small residential districts within a mile radius of mine, mill, or smelter operations. These most basic of mining settlements became known regionally as "locations."

Originally the term was applied to the whole of the mining company's land holdings but soon narrowed to designate all surface structures. In its last refinement, "location" came to mean the small group of residences built on company land—and hence under company control—close to the mine (Alanen 1982: 95-6).

Some mines had only one location, usually bearing the name of the mine. Dozens of these settlements perpetuate the memory of long-defunct mines, among them: Mansfield, Trimountain, Princeton, Ahmeek, and Austin. Other mines built multiple locations to house their expanding work force. Regional architectural geographer Arnold Alanen reports (1991b: 9) that near Negaunee where iron mining began, another cluster of locations would give rise to Ishpeming.

> Cleveland Location (named for its sponsoring company) was formed in 1849: eventually there would be First and Second Cleveland Locations. During the 1850s, Cleveland was joined by four other locations—Superior, Barnum, Lake Angeline, and New York. Some accounts report that in 1860, the five locations were collectively identified as Lake Superior Location.

A 1920 map of the Quincy Copper Mine complex at the top of Quincy hill, overlooking Hancock, shows ten distinct locations with colorful and suggestive

names (Backstreet, Franklin, Frenchtown, Hardscrabble, Limerick, Lower Pewabic, Mesnard, Newtown, Pewabic, and Sing-Sing), plus other platted residential properties, all well within a mile radius of mine operations.

Alanen (1979, 1982) has identified three types of locations. Unplatted locations (called "squatter locations" in Minnesota) such as Princeton Location on the Marquette Range were characterized by a motley collection of vernacular structures haphazardly distributed over the landscape, roads between them generally not more than mere trails around the cut-over stumps.

Company locations, the predominant type, exhibited rigid and monotonous uniformity in orthogonally arranged streets lined by precisely-spaced houses of uniform size and design. Austin Location serves as a classic model: its forty duplex houses, all painted red and surrounded by white picket fences, lined the grid of streets. The mine superintendent's house, painted green for distinction, sat on the hill overlooking the settlement. Three boardinghouses, one each for Finns, Italians, and South Slavs, comprised the rest of the dwellings. The only other structure was a school (Alanen 1991b:17).

The model locations, of which there were very few across the entire three-state Great Lakes mining region, were usually designed by landscape architects rather than mining engineers, and consequently incorporated more variety of housing design, street placement, and landscape as well as electric lighting, water, and sewers. Cleveland-Cliffs Iron built one such location at North Lake on the Marquette Range in 1909 (Reynolds 1994, Alanen 1991b).

Despite variations in size, layout, and aesthetic qualities, locations shared certain important characteristics. Foremost is the fact that they existed on company land for the ultimate benefit of the company. Usually, locations lacked a commercial district. The general store at the mine site (operated either by the company or privately) sufficed unless and until a town grew up nearby to offer a

wider range of goods. Locations also included few if any community institutions. An elementary school was the most likely of any such feature, but only occasionally a church, social club, or temperance hall. Locations served as company-controlled residential centers for workers at the mine, mill, or furnace, not as towns.

Together, a mine site and its location(s) formed the most prevalent type of settlement in the Great Lakes mining region. Lewis (1984) would understand it as a frontier camp, an industrial site dedicated to extraction and processing plus its satellite residential enclaves. Although the numbers of family residences in a location significantly outnumbered the function-specific company boarding-houses, the entire settlement was a venue for boarding. Both the residents and the company policies accepted that as a given: often residents were urged to take in boarders (Magnaghi 1987: 47), and in certain instances company management specifically dictated to employees renting company houses that taking in boarders was a condition of continued employment (Johanson 1993: 36, Peryam 1966: 102).

One resident of Fayette observed: "All the village kept boarding house, and gave meals at all hours" (Langille 1870: 58-59). Census records and personal reminiscences of location life verify this was generally true throughout the region. The boarding work force disbursed across the settlement. Thus boarders, their landlords/ ladies, the institution of boarding and the location facilities where it occurred all became deeply entwined in corporate policies.

As frontier models suggest, locations and their populations were in constant flux. Several copper mine operations had played out and their locations deteriorated into ghost towns by the Civil War (Jamison 1948, Jamison 1965). In that same period a number of iron mines and forges had gone by the wayside (LaFayette 1977). However, many new mines were yet to be developed and

several operated for decades through the nineteenth century and into the twenti-eth. Work forces rose and fell with the boom-bust cycles of the industry, tending over time to expand in certain locales and thus to require additional housing.

Meanwhile, the disadvantages of having the work force distributed over an increasingly large radius from the mine or mill were overcome by changing technology. Motorized man-engines (moving stairways introduced in the mid-1860s) and then man-cars (sled-like affairs with ten benches for thirty men—1890s) moved workers into and out of the mines without extreme expenditure of their own energy. Surface transportation eventually included street cars and automobiles. Communication improved as companies began installing surface and underground telephone systems in the late 1870s.

As conditions and company policy dictated, locations were expanded or new ones built. Each family house became a potential boardinghouse, so compa-nies did not always erect a new boarding-house to accommodate an increasing single male population. At times, however, additional company boardinghouses were constructed, older ones were expanded, or location school houses or dis-pensaries, replaced by newer facilities, were converted to boardinghouse use. At one time near Calumet an old stamping mill had been renovated to house miners of so many European nationalities, it became known as "Noah's Ark" (Drier 1967: 24).

The development of Baltic Location at the Baltic Copper Mine in Houghton County, detailed in company annual reports, illustrates the two-fold expansion of company housing through boardinghouses and family dwellings. In December, 1897, the Baltic Mining Company took possession of the property and over the next thirteen months developed its core of mining and housing structures. This initial building program included a two-story log boarding-house and a smaller frame rooming house for single employees, fourteen

single-family log homes for married employees, and one log house and five frame houses for company officials and their families. The following year the company put up eight more frame homes for employees and another two-story boardinghouse.

In 1900 four double-family log homes and a school went up. Twelve frame employee houses followed in 1901; six additional boardinghouses, four-teen single-family homes and twenty-four double houses in 1902. Ten new dwellings were built in 1904 and two that had burned were replaced.

During 1905 ten more double houses were built and a year later, ten dou-ble houses and six single ones for rent to employees and one house specifically for the company's chief clerk. Two more houses, one for the mine doctor and one for the engineer, were constructed in 1908. As part of this construction and expansion, a location called Brooklyn emerged but was effectively subsumed under the identity of the Baltic Location (Monette 1996: 4-15). Another, "Little Italy," housed Italian stone masons imported to build stone supporting pillars and reinforcing walls in the mine once local timber supplies were exhausted (Clarke 1989: 9-10).

Through this home-building program a company not only established the physical residential component of its industrial site, but determined how many units and of what sort would be built, where, and for whom. This control over housing became crucial to the paternalistic policies of the Michigan mining com-panies.

Paternalism—First Phase, to 1890

Some degree of paternalism was inevitable in the early stages of mining development in Michigan, since the companies had to provide literally every necessity for their dependent work force. How long this period of dependency

lasted in any given place varied according to surrounding conditions, but behind each example of a physical necessity being met, company priorities quietly but decisively shaped the frontier. Into the 1880s (when the Gogebic Iron Range—the last—was opening up), development rested squarely on needs-based paternalism tailored to company priorities. Community-building, and especially housing, shows the most visible evidence of these policies.

The choice to accommodate both single men and men with families is one of those early priorities, and for the reasons already cited: flexibility allowed to the company by the single men; stability provided by the family men. Housing both demographic groups was not the extent of company housing policy, however. The numbers and types of dwellings and the people allowed to occupy them also promoted corporate manipulation of the work force population, both on an individual and a group basis. More valuable employees, judged so either because of their individual skills or their ethnic or political affiliation, received preferential treatment in housing.

Early housing at the Pewabic copper mine illustrates this company manipulation. In 1855 the rich Pewabic lode was discovered. To house the labor force, 108 single men, the company built and outfitted six boardinghouses over the next three years. The men "had no choice of living in individual houses, because the company had not built any." By 1859 when the employees numbered 211, the company expanded two of the boardinghouses and built an additional five. These, however, were the last such accommodations for general workers.

At this point the company began erecting family homes, probably because the work force now included those more desirable employees—married men. In subsequent development at the mine site, Pewabic management incorporated "five 'lodging rooms' for managers in the mine's new office building, and

erected a frame dwelling 'of the better class' . . . 'for the accommodation of engineers.'" Thus by 1862, the occupational and marital status of employees at the Pewabic Mine was clearly and physically reflected by their housing. Moreover, the company began to phase out the boardinghouses, converting them into multiple-family units. By 1866, the company boardinghouses were "notably absent" (Lankton 1991: 149-50).

Company housing types and their spatial arrangement on the landscape reinforced social and cultural separations in other ways. Corporate response to the periodic influxes of immigrant labor included building and designating single-ethnic boardinghouses and locations. For example, Republic-area locations included Swede Town Hill (later Swede Town Location), Finn Town, and French Town. A Negaunee location was known as Finn Alley (Alanen 1991b: 8, 15).

Figure 6. Italian Boardinghouse, Mass Avenue, Mass. (Courtesy Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, and Elma Lukkarila)

Throughout the Copper Country the numerous locations named "Swedetown," Quincy's "Limerick," "Little Italy" near Baltic, and "Irish Hollow" near Rockland further illustrate the practice.

On both iron and copper ranges the numerous locally-designated Finn, Irish, Italian, or Croatian boardinghouses (figure 6) further testify to the region-wide practice of ethnic separation that was also part of the national trend. In 1854, for instance, the Massachusetts mill town of Salmon Falls noted "'the difficulty of keeping Irish and Americans together ... [and urged that] every care must be taken to keep them in separate boardinghouses.'" A large boarding-house "'some distance from the others'" would be assigned to the Irish mill workers (Garner 1992: 131).

The practical expediency of mass construction coupled with ethnic discrimination contributed to separate housing enclaves in Michigan's mining region. For example, instead of enlarging an established location of Cornish workers, a new location and possibly a separate boardinghouse would likely be built to house an in-coming group of Irish, Finns, or Italians. Long-standing rivalries between Cornishmen and the Irish argued the wisdom of keeping them in separate neighborhoods. "The Cornishmen hated the Irishman," notes Thurner (1974: 27). "Their feuds were endless." As for the Finns and Italians, language, religion, and other cultural differences would tend to separate them anyway from the Cornish and each other and concomitantly to draw each group together as a social bulwark in their new land.

Lines of rivalry or solidarity were more complex than language or major religious distinction (Jew, Catholic, or Protestant), however. For example, Italian inter-regional rivalries from the Old Country carried over into Michigan (Magnaghi 1987). Slovenians expressed superiority over Croatians, but Catholic Croatians felt more affinity toward the Catholic Slovenians than toward Eastern

Orthodox Serbs with whom they shared a language. Alanen (1989: 178) contends that "religion played the key role" in defining and unifying an ethnic group and cites one clergyman's confirmation: "in Iron Range locations inhabited by South Slavs, 'the old line of Constantine went down the middle of a location road, and sometimes I suspected the line went right through the middle of a boarding house table.'"

Both the Copper Country and the iron ranges abounded with examples of church congregations that formed or later splintered along very specific ethnic/religious lines. Lake Linden, for example, had two Catholic churches, the German and Irish Holy Rosary and French-speaking St. Joseph's. Near Eagle Harbor the English, French, Germans, "Italians, Poles, Croatians, Slovenians, and Austrians . . . each had their own parishes and priests." In Calumet, four separate Lutheran churches served the Germans, Swedes, Norwegians, and Finns (Lankton 1991: 178-79).

Al Gedicks (1977) suggests the copper companies fostered just such divisiveness as a means of social and economic control over the workers: lacking language and social bridges, the labor force would not organize against management. Hardesty's (1985) example of the Chinese laborers argues that the cosmopolitan frontier the immigrants encountered in northern Michigan would not motivate them to "homogenize," and therefore continued ethnic separation was a natural consequence of their environment except where Americanization was necessary to their survival. What seems certain is that these ethnically-defined locations and boardinghouses created small islands of security in a bond of familiarity, no matter what the larger motivation for their design (McNear 1978: 520).

Emphasis on location-building over town-building also reflected early company moral priorities. Locations were significant both in what they did and

did not include. Instead of legislating morality and social values, the companies

sought to literally build communities grounded in virtue and devoid of vice.

They donated building sites and otherwise fostered churches and synagogues.

They built schools since they considered education a positive social attribute, but

as Alanen (1982: 104) notes, "nothing in a location was more forbidden . . . than a

saloon or tavern." The fact that locations lacked a business district automatical-

ly precluded saloons. The strength of corporate resolve in the matter is suggest-

ed by the following item from *The Menominee Ranger* for July 5, 1879 (in

Cummings 1991: 36), reporting on the developments at the Vulcan Mine:

> VULCAN—It is a wonder with a great many why the Menominee Mining
> Company does'nt [sic] lay out a town site here. There would be lots of
> money in the move for the company. The only reason for not doing so
> is . . . that the company is determined to prevent the sale of intoxicating
> liquors on the location.

Dispensing them without charge was also prohibited. To celebrate the

birth of his son, a Mr. Harrington of Deer Lake Location arranged to smuggle a

keg of beer from Ishpeming to his home in a flour barrel. The company detective

discovered the ruse, however, and diverted the shipment from Harrington's

door (Clancey 1926: 255). Although the companies could not eliminate alcohol

and its disruptive influences from the entire region, they determined to at least

ban it from company property. The result was two-fold: the additional social

functions served by saloons had to shift to other venues, including boarding-

houses, on company property, and saloons lined the streets at the locations'

boundaries and in nearby towns.

Paternalism—Second Phase, after 1890

Meanwhile, in the final decade of the nineteenth century paternalistic

practices changed to reflect the national trend toward "benevolent paternalism."

Michigan social historian Terry S. Reynolds (1994) identifies the several factors

that influenced the significant shift in paternalistic practices in the mining region: due to the Panic of 1893, unemployment was high, wages dropped, and small companies were absorbed into the huge corporations that could financially weather the storm. Adding further financial strain, the Michigan iron industry had been "forced underground as surface deposits were exhausted. This required increased levels of technology and increased capital at a time when securing such capital was difficult" (28). Out-migration led to labor shortages once production resumed, giving workers considerable leverage. On the Gogebic and Marquette Ranges (1894 and 1895 respectively), bloody strikes—an alarming and escalating trend across the nation—signalled worker dissatisfaction, particularly with the new corporate structures they perceived as distant and unsympathetic to labor's needs.

Corporate needs, however, hinged upon production, and hence on once again establishing and then maintaining a stable work force. The failure of both the iron and copper industries in this regard has already been discussed. Nevertheless, industry attempts to attract and hold loyal workers in sufficient supply, coupled with a determination to prevent unionization from taking hold, led it to wholeheartedly embrace the "new paternalism."

One facet of the new program encouraged community development through social participation. Companies donated land for churches and synagogues as never before. They built libraries, community centers, and recreational facilities. Along with all the residential construction at Baltic Mine, for example, in 1904 the company built and equipped a bowling alley for the residents. Also, as though imbued with the spirit of Prof. Harold Hill, companies sponsored silver or brass bands in community after community: shiny instruments were handed to miners resplendent in regal uniforms with equally shiny buttons and braid.

The new paternalistic program also emphasized health and safety, with particular emphasis on the family. Hospitals and medical coverage were expanded. Companies instituted visiting nurse programs to teach home hygiene, nutrition, and child care. Women were encouraged to use doctors and hospital facilities rather than local midwives for childbirth. Company-built bath houses with tubs, showers, and swimming pools offered special "ladies' nights" and children's hours to promote personal cleanliness and exercise. At the C & H facilities, women and children paid nothing; men paid only 2.5¢ (Bernhardt 1975, C&H Annual Report 1911, Dersch 1977: 311). CCI even "established a rest home for the overworked wives of company employees" (Reynolds 1994: 30). Fire protection, garbage collection, new water systems, and electric service to homes appeared throughout the region.

Amidst all this largess, however, the companies did not abandon their emphasis on morality and social control. With an absence of local saloons, location-living reinforced the notion that when a man left work, his proper destination was home . Company-sponsored neighborhood improvement programs made home an even more attractive destination. Throughout the mining region, companies enclosed yards with fences and promoted gardening competitions, not only for the horticultural beauty introduced into otherwise drab locations, but also because a man puttering in his garden was not wasting time seeking out and habituating a saloon. Such gardening activity occupied both householders and boarders.

Company towns, which "differed from locations in that they were usually larger and allowed commercial enterprise" (Alanen 1994: 33-34), were rare on the Michigan mining ranges, but not altogether absent. In these settlements, corporate social control became even more overt. At Palmer, on the Marquette Range, company policy allowed only a single, heavily-regulated saloon; elsewhere on

the Marquette Range, CCI operated a movie house in the 1920s "so that 'proper supervision could be maintained over the character of the films which might be exhibited in the town'" (Reynolds 1994: 31). On the Keweenaw, the Mohawk and Wolverine mining companies built and controlled Gay, a mill town twelve miles south of the mines. It has been called "the classic example of a company town" (Frimodig 1990: 7).

Housing, however, remained the most visible and dynamic facet of the new paternalistic program. Technological improvements such as interior plumbing and electricity, and exterior variety in design, color, and landscape increased. In 1907, CCI even built Michigan's only company model town, Gwinn, on the Marquette Range, according to the design of famed Boston landscape architect Warren H. Manning. Notable for their absence in the town plan were designated boardinghouses; that absence indicative of the changing national concept toward both company housing and residential accommodation in general. Gwinn certainly did not lack boarders, however, a fact significant to the next chapter.

Decline of the Company Boardinghouse

Numerous factors contributed to the decline of the company boardinghouse after the turn of the century. Nationally, Progressives and other social reformers promoted the nuclear family as the cornerstone of society and the family home as the bastion of morality, civility, and democracy (Wolfe 1906, Wright 1980, 1981). The notion validated the services for wives and children of the mine workers that companies were instituting through their own self-interest. It also argued for single-family home designs and increasing domestic technological benefits (Wright 1980)—further dovetailing with the corporate measures designed to promote loyalty among its married employees.

Reformers' visions also melded in part with the mining companies' own priorities regarding its single workers. The Pewabic example in the 1860s

(above) is a case in point. Nationally, boardinghouses had become unfavorably associated with urban immigrant enclaves, particularly the "new immigrants" from Eastern Europe (Wolfe 1906). Michigan governors expressed concern over the "yellow peril," Mormons, Irish, and other "undesirables" as justification for dismantling the state Immigration Bureau (Warner and Underhill 1974: 62-66). The nuclear family ideal lessened the social value of a mining community's "rolling stones" (those single male workers—generally immigrants—likely to be particularly transient), and the family home ideal lessened the social value of their company boardinghouse residence.

Furthermore, companies were inclined to cut overhead wherever possible and to avoid unnecessary encumbrances. Services such as company stores initially provided through necessity were usually transferred to private control as quickly as possible, in part to simplify company responsibilities, in part to avoid the exploitive-company-store-image generated in Appalachian coal-mining towns. Restrictive policies did not pay: when the Penn Mining Company near Norway reprimanded a man and threatened his job for by-passing the company store and ordering through the Sears Roebuck catalog, the man changed employers (Bernhardt 1981: 416).

Just as methodically but perhaps with a lessened sense of urgency, companies shifted boarding increasingly toward the private sector. They also shifted the boardinghouses. Unnecessary buildings were relocated onto other company properties or they were sold to private owners for reuse or to be torn down for their salvage potential. Boardinghouses were among those company buildings disposed of in these ways. (*See* Epilogue for details of specific house disposition.)

Thus by the turn of the century, national social values reinforced the companies' own preference for a work force of family men housed in single-family

units. Necessity, however, compromised the ideal: at the very time that companies were most inclined to emphasize family housing to attract the employees they most wanted and to rely on the private sector for peripheral boarding facilities, they were forced back into the needs-based mode of providing company boardinghouses for influxes of single male laborers.

Development of new mines in the early years of the twentieth century accounted for numerous new company boardinghouses. On the Marquette Range, the American Mine began operations in 1906. The adjacent location included "ten company houses and a boardinghouse." Princeton Location had begun in 1871 with twelve houses and a single boardinghouse, but further mine development over the years led to extensive expansion early in the century. By 1914 Princeton had at least four large boardinghouses, one with three stories, the others with two (Sanborn maps, Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Co. 1931). Despite this expansion, additional locations and boardinghouses were needed in the area. Austin Location was established in 1906-07 with its three large boardinghouses and soon after, Cyr Location with another company boardinghouse (Alanen 1991b: 13, 16-17).

South of Wakefield on the Gogebic Range, an ore discovery in 1912 became the Wakefield Open Pit Mine, complete with a three-building complex of boarding facilities. Four years later yet another new open pit mine, the Plymouth, began operations in the same region (Johnson 1993, Sell 1990). In the Mineral Hills district (north of Iron River on the western Menominee Range), several new mines were opened between 1906 and 1916. The locations for three of the mines—the Spies, the Homer, and the Forbes—each included a company boardinghouse (*Mineral Hills* 1968).

The range-wide copper strike of 1913-14 and the war-time demand for copper also prompted a renewed surge of company boardinghouse building.

Contrary to one tally that denied the existence of any company boardinghouses at the time of the strike (Committee 1913), Quincy Mining Company records show that one John C. Mann ran four boardinghouses (Pewabic, and Quincy No. 6 Shaft, No. 7, and No. 8) for strike breakers ("scabs") imported by that company (Mann 1913).

After the strike, company efforts to rebuild the labor force centered on importing many foreign men and consequently necessitated building new boarding accommodations for them and expanding and refurbishing others. This frenzy of building, which also included numerous family homes, was carried out at Quincy under the direction of Mine Superintendent Charles Lawton. Lawton's scheme emphasized the presumed link between family housing and "a steadier crew," simultaneously agreeing only reluctantly to expand boarding facilities:

> "I, however, am inclined to advise against [such enlargement]; that is to leave so many men congregated in one place would need deputy sheriffs in control all the time, twenty-four hours a day, and will add to the expense of maintaining the boarding house, as there are apt to be more quarrels and gambling occurring among such a large body of men together; and yet as a temporary institution it may be best." (McNear 1978: 528)

In April, 1917, when Lawton expressed these thoughts to William Todd, then Quincy President, a new company boardinghouse accommodating forty to fifty men had already been constructed and over the next few months three other structures were modified to boardinghouse use (figure 40). In 1918 Quincy was operating four boardinghouses providing for two hundred men. Two years later, however, with the war-inflated copper demand at an end and severe labor shortage in the region, these houses had all been closed (McNear 1978: 528).

Housing expansion also became necessary early in the century at the Victoria Mine in Ontonagon County (figure 7). This mine had not been closed

down by the labor action of 1913 and by 1916 its labor force was burgeoning. In response, the main company boardinghouse located at the mine head was expanded to house nearly one hundred men (VCM Files—Hooper correspondence).
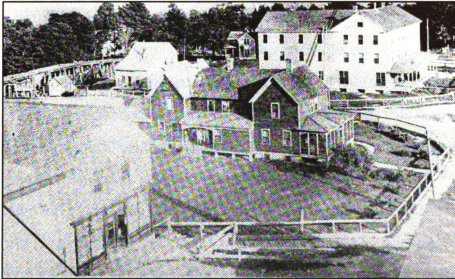
Figure 7. *Top*, Victoria Mining Company Boardinghouse; *center*, next to Supervisor's home; and *foreground*, company store. (Courtesy Pat Thorgren, Society for Restoration of Old Victoria)

Thus company boardinghouses continued to serve their purpose well into the twentieth century, despite company preference to be rid of them. The companies knew that housing for their work force, although no longer the absolute necessity in physical terms that it had been when a new mine was opened in an isolated region, remained an integral part of their paternalistic package and a very real basis by which they competed for employees. Quincy President William R. Todd expressed what was probably the philosophy of every mining company in Michigan:

> "While we do not want to get into the boarding house business, it is necessary for us to see that the boarding house is properly run and the men

have proper food and attention. . . . We cannot afford to have men leaving on account of boarding house conditions if it is possible to retain them." (McNear 1978: 527)

Mining companies became significant community-builders throughout the Michigan mining district and in that capacity they made full use of their opportunity. They not only created a built environment, but imposed company and often national notions of ethics and social morality upon those communities. Particularly through company housing and the institution of boarding, mining companies attempted to manipulate their work force. Whether a positive or a negative means to social control and stability, the fact remains that companies promoted ethnic separation through boardinghouses and location housing, reiforcing economic, social, and occupational segregation.

Moreover, by the turn of the century the companies realized the potential opportunity to skew their work force toward married men by phasing out boardinghouses and augmenting family housing—consistent with both their paternalistic self-interest and American housing trends. A national guide on industrial housing that appeared right after World War I specifically noted the advantage of company towns

> "built to order" [that would permit] a conscious control over the selection of the classes of employees. . . . Industrial managers and foremen know only too well that the percentage of married to single men carried on the payroll is often affected by the casual availability of rooms or houses in the neighborhood. The correct percentage can be maintained by provid ing the right proportion of houses and rooms. (Knowles 1920: 15)

A certain percentage of single men, those "rolling stones," could also be useful, however, because of their greater expendability. The ideal solution would be to shift the single men into private boarding accommodations and what amounted to secondary company boardinghouses, those company-owned family homes rented by mining employees who also took in boarders. Such a solution was theoretically possible because boarding was so widespread

throughout the mining districts—a factor the companies counted on to shift their burden. The renewed demand for needs-based boardinghouses during the first two decades of this century merely postponed realization of the goal. Few company boardinghouses lasted through the 1920s.

Mining locations and the few company towns comprised significant settlements throughout the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. After the first flush of mining activity drew attention to the region, and as transportation systems began to open up successive areas to settlement and trade, a second extractive industry—lumbering and wood products manufacturing separate from lumbering for the mines—produced yet another whole set of company mill towns. Cut-over regions developed as farm communities, and cities grew through entrepreneurial expansion. Thus the private sector of the region formed in concert with mining development. This growth produced both an additional need for boarding accommodation and a venue to supply it.

So developed across the Michigan mining region the specific types of boardinghouses identified in an earlier chapter: 1) company boardinghouses, 2) commercial boardinghouses, and 3) family homes that included boarders. Company boarding and private enterprise became entwined. The excess of mining employees not accommodated by mine housing spilled over into the private sector. Householders renting a company house in a location took in boarders for company convenience but their own profit. Managers of company boardinghouses operated as independent contractors whose income depended upon the efficiency of their house management, not a salary from the company. The economics and modes of operation of the Michigan mining boardinghouses serve both to categorize them as above, but also to examine their relative roles within the developing society.

CHAPTER 5

BOARDINGHOUSE OPERATION, COMPANIES, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Managing a boardinghouse required numerous skills and tremendous stamina, as it could become nearly a twenty-four-hour-a-day responsibility. Some managers demonstrated more ability than others for careful budgeting and accurate record-keeping, maintaining necessary schedules, hiring and supervising staff, producing meals in appropriate quantity and quality, seeing to laundry, gardening, cleaning, and numerous other chores, while promoting conviviality and harmony within the household. Managers either operated their own establishments or, as in company boardinghouses, hired on to manage a house owned by others. Apparently some of these freelance managers built considerable reputations, generating competitive offers for positions. In any case, communities seem to have taken note of those who operated the boardinghouses and locally even company boardinghouses were often known by the name of the manager rather than by the company or location name.

Managing Company Boardinghouses

The mining companies took a keen interest in assigning the operation of their boardinghouses to competent people. As Quincy's President Todd had noted (above), conditions in a company boardinghouse clearly influenced the work force and therefore it behooved the companies to monitor their houses, but

they contracted out the day-to-day operation. Mining company boardinghouses were not run *by* the companies, but *through* them. Arrangements were made with a local man, perhaps with hotel experience, or with wives or widows of local miners with reputations as good cooks and expert household managers; occasionally a miner and his family would be employed, he to do heavy chores after his shift in the mine, his wife and children to cook, clean, and manage most everything else; in other cases professional managers were brought in from outside the community.

A series of letters in the Victoria Copper Mining Company files between Mining Captain George Hooper and Mrs. Evalyn Cook illustrates the company standards and the benefits offered to a perspective manager. In 1917 the company had expanded its main boardinghouse (figure 7) to "easily accommodate eighty or ninety men" and Hooper solicited a new manager for the facility, as the current one had given notice. Evalyn Cook, a thirty-year-old widow with two children from Paris, Michigan (just north of Big Rapids), applied for the position. She cited ten years' experience, cooking in several places before she married and then three years at a Paris hotel.

According to Hooper, the house she was to run was furnished and included thirty-two rooms for boarders, a number of them with double bunks accommodating four men per room. The dining room sat 100-125. Among the facilities of the house were "two ranges in the kitchen, one six lid and one ten lid stove." There was a root cellar and a separate basement area with "toilets and washing rooms" for the men. The manager's private apartment had six rooms.

Besides supplying the physical plant of the boardinghouse, the company also provided steam heat, and hot water "independent of the stoves" was piped in and supplied by the company. There was no electricity, however; the house used oil lamps.

Managing a boardinghouse involved the domestic chores—cooking, gardening, canning, cleaning, laundry for the house and manager's family—and also financial management. The financial arrangement described by Hooper is typical: the boardinghouse manager set the board fee; the company office collected the men's board and passed it on to the manager. Rates varied, but had to remain competitive: about one dollar per day was the usual fee at that time. Victoria management had announced a rise in board to "twenty-eight dollars per month beginning October 15, 1917."

By contrast, in the early days of mining, rates were about three dollars per week, or twelve dollars monthly. War-inflated prices and wages during the Civil War sent monthly board in the Copper Country to eighteen dollars, monthly earnings beyond board from sixty to ninety (Buzzo to Cooper, 4 June, 1864).

Cook's expenses would include her kitchen fuel, lamp oil, all the food and other basic supplies for the house, plus her rent—which was one dollar per month per boarder—plus, of course, personal necessities for herself and her family. Thus with the house at capacity, Evalyn Cook could expect to feed three meals per day to ninety boarders, her family, and occasional managerial personnel. From the men's board of $2700 per month, she would owe ninety dollars rent for her apartment plus all the costs of running the house. Supplies were readily available: Hooper notes that "the company has a store and can furnish you with all the necessities that you want [but] you are [at] liberty to buy from whom you please." If her food was tasty and ample, and if she managed frugally keeping meals well under thirty cents per serving and other house costs at a minimum, she could clear a small profit to cover personal expenses for her family and perhaps even build a bit of a nest egg. If she skimped on the meals or was careless in her management, however, she could lose both her job and her home.

With monthly wages in the double digits and commodity prices in

fractions of cents, literally every penny counted. As one manager was about to leave and another assume responsibility for a house, the company management prepared an inventory of the entire house contents. An inventory of furnishings such as beds, mattresses, chairs, washstands, etc. served two purposes. The list would be compared to those items in the house when the out-going manager had assumed control of the house and he or she would presumably be responsible for any unaccounted discrepancies. It was also the inventory of items passed into the charge of the new manager (VBH inventory June 1, 1915).

Disposable items such as food and cleaning supplies purchased by the manager but left with the house had to be accounted for, the assets they represented transferred to the departing manager, and liability for the goods imposed upon the new manager. An inventory of the Victoria boarding-house larder when it was transferred to Wilfred Roy in July, 1918, included over four hundred pounds of meat, cases of canned milk and vegetables, dried fruits, large quantities of baking ingredients, boxes of cookies and crackers, two types of tea, seventy-five pounds of coffee, eighty-five pounds of soap, forty rolls of toilet paper, two brooms, and more than a dozen oil lamps and chimneys. The lot was valued at $454.70, a considerable beginning stock for Roy and significant assets for the departing manager to redeem. Although the inventories do not specify, the company probably reimbursed the out-going manager for those supplies and exacted re-payment from the new manager in his first month or two of operation. Here again, management operated through company agency.

Apparently companies regarded boardinghouses as necessary overhead and did not seek profit from their operation, but from the financial arrangements described by Hooper to Cook, the company did attempt at least to cover costs. The building and furnishings represented a considerable outlay. The company, ordinarily responsible for general maintenance of its physical plant, had just

expanded this particular boardinghouse, presumably spending more than would have been necessary for maintenance and thus increasing its investment.

Charging the boardinghouse manager one dollar per boarder for monthly rent seems to have allowed the company substantial margin to apply against its investment. At this time throughout the mining region, company-built family houses rented for one dollar or less per room per month. Thus, if the six-room accommodation offered to Cook had been a family house, she could have paid six dollars per month for it, not ninety dollars. Without the provision of steam heat and piped-in hot water as in the boardinghouse, Cook would need to purchase fuel for home heating (possibly nine or ten months of the year) and additional kitchen fuel to heat hot water for cooking, bathing, and laundry. At some locations piped in water and sewer services were available at this time, generally for one dollar per month. With a generous allowance for the extra fuel and even adding in a charge for water, Cook's hypothetical monthly housing cost could be roughly eighty dollars less renting a company family house than operating the company boardinghouse. That eighty dollars represents an offset of overhead for the company. To Cook it would represent the cost of doing business, her investment in an opportunity to support herself and her family, similar to a franchise arrangement today.

That her business provided a home for herself and her family is also important to note. A woman alone, especially with dependent children, could be hard-pressed to make enough to buy a house. The hypothetical example above was for cost comparison only. Unless she was the widow of a miner already established in a company house, she would be unlikely to have access to such inexpensive housing.

Even if she were a widow in a company house, and no matter how lenient company policy might be theoretically, that arrangement might not likely

continue for long if the demand for such housing was high. In such a situation, the company itself might make every effort to move her from a company family rental to a company boardinghouse where she could earn her living. That way, she could stay near the community where she had been living, the company would not appear heartless in removing her from the house which it would then re-assign to a valuable worker and his family, and she could earn her support in a socially acceptable manner that further benefitted the company. If the situation argued that the better course was to allow the widow to stay in the company-owned family home at reduced rent, deriving her income from boarders, that too was sometimes done. It was not uncommon, however, for widows and their families to be turned out after a brief grace period (Pisoni 1973, Johanson 1993, Lankton 1991). (Johanson also notes that not only housing, but women were scarce at Victoria, so widows often remarried before their grace period expired.)

Shifting the operation of their boardinghouses to independent contractors lessened the mining companies' burden of housing their men. It was a burden they admittedly had had to accept where "the mine is the only reason why community life has developed in the particular locality; . . . [where otherwise] there are no houses available or likely to be provided" (Magnusson 1920: 21).

Boarding in Family Homes, Locations or Company Towns

As noted above, many of the mining region dwellings were built on company land. Most of these were built by the companies, though in some cases companies rented house lots to individuals who constructed their own homes on these parcels. Therefore a few homes within a location might be owned rather than rented from the company, though the company still owned the land under them. In any case, if the dwelling was on company land, the residents were subject to company rules and expectations.

Boarding was obviously one of those expectations. Lankton and Hyde (1982), for example, emphasize that Quincy housing units, both family homes and company boardinghouses, periodically accommodated only a portion of the total Quincy work force. Often this situation prevailed across the mining region: workers exceeded company housing units. Additional housing and spill-over boarding facilities were required. One venue for additional boarding was within the homes in locations and company towns. Company acceptance of and even reliance on boarding in individual homes becomes evident through company policies requiring their housing tenants to board additional mine employees (Johanson 1993: 37, Peryam 1966: 102) and the absence of any restriction against the practice of boarding in homes when other restrictions were extensive and blatant, e.g. at Gwinn, CCI's model town. There, where designated company and commercial boardinghouses were specifically excluded from the model town, the majority of homes in the 1910 census nevertheless included boarders.

Householders in company rental houses who took in boarders bridged company and private sector. Not unlike managers of company boardinghouses, they rented their dwelling from the company and turned their labor both toward the company enterprise and also toward accommodating the boarders, but of course the entire focus differed. Unlike the big boardinghouse, the individual house was still primarily the home of the mining employee and his family; boarding was its secondary purpose. Having access to a company home amounted to a considerable cost advantage for the miner's family. One miner's wife expressed the appreciation many felt for their situation:

> "They paid small wages but they also provided you with a house, very cheap rent—for instance, our house had four rooms down and four rooms up, and was five dollars a month rent. There was a big garden around it already fenced. We paid a dollar for the lights, a dollar for the water, and a dollar for the doctor. Eight dollars a month was all it cost for all of them." (in Reynolds 1994: 32)

Whether his boarders were there by company mandate or his own choice, the householder could demonstrate company loyalty by lessening the housing shortage and supplement his income at the same time. His low housing costs thanks to company paternalism produced an extra margin of profit, though not necessarily cash in hand. As in the case of the company boardinghouse, corporate management acted as agent between its laborers and their landlords. Johanson (1993: 37) reports that at the Victoria Mine,

> the families who were assigned boarders were not paid in cash for this service, but simply had their accounts at the company store credited with the board [sixteen dollars per month] that was deducted from the boarder's paycheck before the paycheck was issued. . . .

Despite the enticement of extra income, however, boarding others at the company's behest had its disadvantages. Company decisions could be contrary to the householder's wishes. He might feel lumbered with intruders in his household; individual boarders placed there by the company might be offensive; there might be inadequate room for desired friends or relatives to board if company quotas had to be met first. On the other hand, the company could bar someone it considered a troublemaker from company property, including his boarding accommodation. Allowing such a person back into his residence could jeopardize the householder's claim to his house as well as his employment. Thus for those who were both renters and landlords/ladies in company-owned housing, their position was potentially profitable and yet precarious. Their participation in the institution of boarding enabled them to sell a service as did those in the private sector, but not without further entanglement in company policies.

Boardinghouse Operation in the Private Sector

The development of townsites across the mining ranges arose through entrepreneurial activity stimulated by mining development. Some of these

townsites were originally platted by the mining companies and individual lots sold off to private owners; others grew on privately-owned and platted land from the beginning. Generally, these towns sought to supply the commercial enterprises lacking in the locations. Due to the widespread ban on alcohol in the locations and some company towns, saloons were often the first enterprise in these private business centers, remaining a prominent part of the economy until Prohibition. One wag commented that in the port town of Eagle River in the 1850s, "drinking seemed to be 'the principal business transacted'" (Thurner 1994: 68) and just up the peninsula Wyoming was known locally as Hell Town for the boisterous Saturdays in the two saloons and the barbershop (Clarke 1975c: 16, Monette 1987: 96).

The businesses in these communities, however, came to offer a full range of goods and services including grocers, clothiers, confectioners, bakers, bankers, blacksmiths and wagon makers (later auto sales and gasoline stations), milliners, schools, religious houses, warehouses, brewers, railroad depots, insurance agents, shipping agents, communications agents (telegraph, telephone), newspapers, and boardinghouses.

The private-sector boardinghouses were of two economic types, the commercial house and the private residence. As already noted, the differentiation between these two types had more to do with the proportion of family income derived from boarding than with the architectural features of the establishment, since in some family homes boarders produced the entire support of the resident family and these residences are more accurately classified as commercial establishments. The uncertainty of family income and of the proportion derived from boarding in specific cases, plus the fact that supplemental boarding income could became a family's sole support from time to time, makes the differentiation even more difficult. Thus there will be some unavoidable cross-over

between the family-based commercial houses and home-based boarding in the discussions below.

Commercial Boardinghouses

Commercial boardinghouses could be found in virtually any townsite in the Michigan mining region. The opening of a new mine frequently stimulated private enterprise nearby and towns arose quickly. So did boardinghouses. In the Copper Country, for example, in 1855 the north side of Portage Lake was nothing but forest, but mining operations on Quincy Hill enticed pioneer entrepreneurs. A few men began clearing the land that would become Hancock. While all was still "nothing but timber," a Mr. Udich, a man of foresight, "knocked together a shack for a boardinghouse" (Thurner 1994: 99).

Expanding mining ventures and Hancock's presence on the north side of Portage Lake spawned Houghton on the south. Mining had been carried out there since 1853 by fewer than one hundred men. A small location included five boardinghouses, several homes, a company office, a blacksmith shop and a stamp mill (Clarke 1990: 8). Expansion soon occurred. Incorporated on November 1, 1861, with a population of 854, Houghton recorded over two thousand residents a year later. Despite three large hotels and numerous small boarding-houses, a contemporary observer noted: "'Every house is crammed with humanity'" (Thurner 1994: 76-78).

On the Menominee Iron Range, town-building was already underway as the first mine shafts were being sunk. A reporter for *The Mining Journal* wrote on November 3, 1877: "Arriving at Powers . . . I found everything in a flourishing condition. The place is laid out for a town, but the only buildings there as yet are a post-office and several boardinghouses. The boardinghouses are all full to overflowing." Elsewhere on the Menominee Range the situation was the same.

Besides the Menominee Mining Company boardinghouse at the Chapin Location, it seems there were three commercial boardinghouses in the incipient Iron Mountain City within weeks of the mine's opening (1879). Many more would follow (Dulan 1978).

As these and other independent townsites developed and some ultimately incorporated as cities, commercial boardinghouses continued to provide accommodation and income to the populace. These commercial boardinghouses operated in several forms. Some, situated in the central business district and generally occupying substantial quarters, were relatively indistinguishable physically from the hotels next to which they sat; others were the upper or back portion of commercial buildings such as stores or restaurants; still others were private homes, some having been modified to accommodate the maximum number of paying residents. In each case, the resident family derived its living from this dedicated business enterprise in a building that housed both its business endeavor and its living quarters.

In individual cases, a hotel or a saloon could also provide for commercial boarding. Although a travelers' hotel was not a boardinghouse *per se*, a number of hotels designated specific rooms or floors as residential accommodation, thereby adding boarding to the services they offered. Some saloons offered boarding as a secondary business. Such businesses might or might not formally advertise the boarding aspect of the business, but a sign in the window or word of mouth alerted townsmen of the rooms' availability.

The Lake Linden Hotel, for example, had a few back rooms for lumbermen who came to town on a spree each payday and better rooms in front for fourteen regular Calumet and Hecla boarders. A number of the better rooms were also available for travelers, which often included politicians, C&H physicians, and the like (Brunet 1993). Thomas Smart purchased the two-story Lake

View House in Hancock in 1872. He maintained it as a boardinghouse until 1881 when he added a third story and transformed it into "the leading hotel at the time" (Maki 1984:8). The Falk Hotel in Menominee "operated as boardinghouse, 'speakeasy,' and restaurant" (Bayee 1963).

The 1886-87 Marquette City and County Directory catalogs boarding establishments in the City of Marquette under various headings and without particular consistency. In the business section under "Boardinghouses" there are fifteen listings, four adding a further designation, "boardinghouse and saloon." A fifth entry reads "sample rooms and boardinghouse." In another instance, the boarding facility and the saloon carry different business names but at the same address, and listings include cross reference. Each of these six also appear among the twenty-five saloons listed under that heading.

Two additional such businesses, the Alpena House "saloon and boarding" and A. Rose "saloon and boardinghouse" had no listing in the business section; they appear in the residential listings under the proprietors' names. John Selander's facility is listed in the business directory under "Saloons" without additional designation, but his residential listing says "sample room and boardinghouse."

Listings under "Hotels" plus display ads identify fourteen hotels in the city. Twelve of these hotels were boarding town residents. One of them, the Travelers' Home, is cross-referenced as a boardinghouse in the residential listing of Charles Warner, proprietor.

Two more commercial boardinghouses had been established above restaurants, further capitalizing on the "board" aspect of the business by serving food to street traffic as well as to boarders.

In the directory residential listings, an additional nine addresses include the notation "boardinghouse." The status of these establishments is ambiguous.

A couple of them, specifically the Goodenburg House and the LaLonde Boardinghouse, suggest small commercial businesses, both by their names and the number of boarders at each. The rest may also have been small but fully commercial establishments or merely private homes that took in a few boarders and wanted to advertise that fact. Three were identified as being operated by widows.

The many examples of commercial boardinghouses attest to their prevalence and variety. Individual examples also illustrate a few of the adaptations frequently found in association with commercial boarding.

George Premo built a one-story hotel in Amasa, opening it in May, 1900. Demand for boarding accommodation for the growing number of miners led to expansion in 1905. Premo purchased a large hotel building in nearby Sidnaw, dismantled it, and used the materials to add a substantial second story, including a balcony all round, to his building. George's wife ran the kitchen, and together they operated this hotel/boardinghouse until 1920 (Peryam 1966, Premo 1902, 1906, Premo 1993).

In 1884 the William Cordes family of Menominee bought the Bay View House from a Jack McCarthy, who had run it as a saloon with sleeping rooms in the upper two floors. The new owners changed both the building and the focus of its operation. They took up residence, kept the barroom but expanded the structure (see figure 30) and operated it as a family-run commercial boardinghouse for the single men working at the Sheridan Circle furnace (Knuth 1992, 1993).

Origin of the Calliari Hotel in Palatka lies in one of the hundreds of mine tragedies and shows how a change in family circumstance can alter the scope of its boarding enterprise. One day in 1904 a mine superintendent "showing off" caused the death of a miner. The widow and her seven children were at first

assured they could stay in the company location house where her boarders would provide income for the large family, but soon after they were forced from company housing. Two lean years followed until the company made a settlement on the widow, Maria Calliari. With her windfall she built a three-story hotel, opera house, and bakery in the nearby town. The hotel was principally a miners' boardinghouse where two hundred occupied thirty-five rooms on rotation, night-shift workers rolling into the beds just vacated by day-shift men (Pisoni 1973, Bernhardt 1975: 72).

Candido Pisoni had worked the mines near Iron River, but he hated and feared mining. He preferred business. He and his wife Anna (Maria Calliari's daughter) ran a saloon for three years, then in 1913 bought a hotel near Forbes Location from a Mike Mahoney Mahaney. The couple operated two businesses from the building and divided the chores between them: Anna opened a boardinghouse for thirty-five boarders, both miners and lumbermen; Candido ran a logging enterprise during the winter and in the summer he farmed, produced hay for his teams of horses, prepared the large household garden, and laid in the next winter's supply of wood for the boardinghouse. Until Prohibition the family also continued operation of the barroom that was part of the old hotel (Pisoni 1973, Mineral Hills 1968).

Just as a saloon in conjunction with a boarding facility could take various position from incidental to predominant, the commercial boardinghouse kitchen could remain exclusive for the boarders or it could serve additional customers and even assume a separate economic identity. Two Marquette examples already mentioned were the boardinghouses over the Boston and the Eureka Restaurants. In the same year (1887) Anton Theby operated the City Restaurant and Boardinghouse in Wakefield on the Gogebic Range. The establishment's popularity was noted in a newspaper item at the time, as was the proprietor's

obliging service: "'He keeps a first class place, sets a good table and makes it pleasant for all, and if you are in need of fresh vegetables you can always find them at Anton's'" (Cox 1983: 40).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an interesting mix of commercial houses dotted the Michigan mining landscape. Some, like the company houses, catered to single-gender and single-occupation residents, but with a wider variety. A scattering of houses show specialization in railroad workers, stone masons, milliners, and dressmakers. Certain cases involved a master/mistress of the trade housing his or her apprentices. More prevalent were boardinghouses for teachers. Thurner (1994: 170) notes that "one Mine Street boardinghouse at Calumet contained so many teachers that wags labeled it The Hennery."

One type of commercial boarding house that particularly capitalized on the single-gender/single-occupation form was the "house of ill repute." Examples "sprouted like mushrooms." Arrests and threats of action by mine agents seem to have done little to deter the activity. In Hancock, John Cabus was so bold (and honest) as to list his occupation for the 1880 federal census as "'Keeper of a House of Ill-Fame'" (Lankton and Hyde 1982: 89). At Wakefield the marshall regularly raided the notorious Sunday Lake Hotel with no apparent permanent impact (Cox 1983: 34). It took the indignation of the men of Fayette plus a bit of arson to rid the nearby town of one such house and to free the girls virtually imprisoned there (LaFayette 1977: 45).

Legitimate commercial houses served a far more disparate clientele than regularly found in the company houses. For example, in 1886 at the W. J. Shaw Boarding house in Marquette, occupations of the nine boarders were clerk, customs agent, engineer, fisherman, laborer, machinist, missionary, oil inspector, and stone mason. At the Christy House that same year, besides a photographer,

watchmaker, laundryman, the night manager of the Western Union office, and an employee of Iron Bay Manufacturing (all males), there was a Mrs. H. H. Doone, in the employ of I. Neuberger, a major clothier in town (*Marquette City and County Directory 1886-87*). One of the more colorful residents at the Red Jacket (Calumet) boardinghouse above Keckonen's Hardware was a Mme. Buddha, self-proclaimed "clairvoyant and trance medium."

MME. BUDDHA

CLAIRVOYANT AND TRANCE MEDIUM.

CLAIRVOYANT AND TRANCE MEDIUM

Located over Keckonen's Hardware

438 North Fifth St., Red Jacket

YOUR PAST
PRESENT AND FUTURE
OUTLINED

No Questions Asked. Guaranteed Satisfaction
PHOTOGRAPHS
Photographs of your friends read scientifically
You are cordially invited
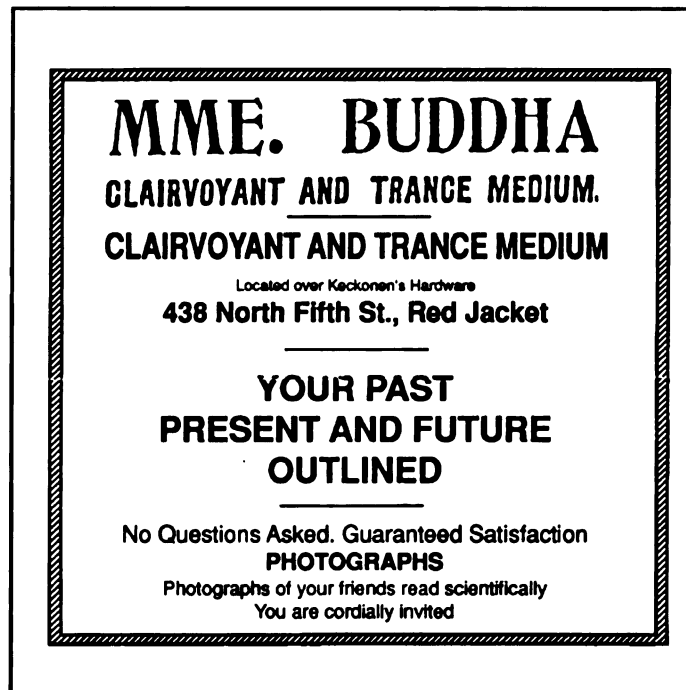
Figure 8. Mme. Buddha's newspaper advertisement. (Courtesy *Keweenaw Press*)

The Co-operative *Poika Talo*

With expanding needs for housing and only the natural limits of the marketplace and the industry of its entrepreneurs to drive their endeavors, no single ethnic group cornered the market on commercial boardinghouses, nor was any group specifically shut out. However, when one ethnic group came to America and encountered the boardinghouse for the first time, it applied its economic philosophy and created a distinct form of commercial boardinghouse in the Great Lakes mining area.

Boardinghouses did not exist as an institution in Finland. When the first Finns emigrated to America in the 1860s and made their way to the forests and mines of the Upper Great Lakes, they discovered what they referred to as a *poika talo*, variously translated as "youth home," "boys' house," or "bachelors' house"—an apt description of the single-male enclaves becoming increasingly evident in successive waves of mining booms. The same impulses that enticed other ethnic countrymen to board together led to many Finn boardinghouses. Late in the nineteenth century, many of these had developed along very distinct economic lines: they were boarding co-operatives.

Throughout the region the Finns became known for their co-operative business ventures. Distinct from the production stock companies put together by Eastern financiers that were the driving force behind the mining development, Finnish co-operatives brought together Finns of the lower social and economic levels to finance and benefit directly from every-day businesses, particularly housing and groceries. The idea behind these consumer co-operatives was simple: a group of people formally organized and bought wholesale, personally benefitting from the savings and then dividing profit made by selling to outsiders.

Investment was based on buying shares of the business. Those who owned shares also owed a commitment of time and/or labor to the enterprise. Officers of the co-operative answered not only to members/shareholders, but to a regional organization that monitored and assisted all the local co-op ventures. The strong cultural heritage of the Finns to work and live collectively plus their Socialistic political leanings made co-operative boardinghouses a particularly appealing business venture and living arrangement in the Michigan mining region.

Where heavy concentrations of Finns developed, *poika talot* did too. If the

enclave was on private property in the Great Lakes area, a *poika talo* was likely operated as a co-operative. In a departure from the usual trend to call a boardinghouse after the proprietor or the head of its kitchen, the Finn co-op boardinghouses were often given inspirational names drawn from Finnish epic literature or expressing a noble ideal. One of scores of examples from Minnesota's mining region was Jukola, founded at Virginia in 1909 and named for seven heroic brothers in a popular Finnish novel. Heavy demand prompted an expansion of kitchen, dining room and sleeping facilities and the addition of a ladies' parlor in 1912.

> During its busiest period Jukola used to serve 450 persons daily in its din
> ing room and was known for its excellent food. Drinking and cardplay
> ing were strictly forbidden on the premises. During 1915-17, Jukola also
> operated its own grocery store in basement quarters in the building. . . .
> (Wasastjerna 1957: 434)

Examples in Michigan were more modest, but operated along the same lines. A number of men would pool their resources, purchase a suitable building, and take in additional boarders on a shares basis. Each resident shared not only in any profits, but also in the chores and other responsibilities. Alanen (1991a) reports four co-operative houses in Marquette County, one each in Ishpeming, Marquette, Negaunee, and North Lake Location.

The records of one such co-operative boardinghouse in Wakefield, Gogebic County, in the early part of this century details the business activities and domestic decisions made by the owners, including hiring a succession of cooks and other domestic helpers over the years, choosing wallpaper patterns for various rooms, and buying out members who had decided to return to Finland (Wakefield *Poika Talo* Record Book 1917-32).

The boardinghouse was known as *Aspirant* ("Endeavor"). In the summer of 1917 a seven-man committee was charged with finding a property and

subsequently reported on four houses available. The one purchased included second-floor furnishings. A constitution was drawn up to formalize the co-operative arrangement and the men began preparations for opening the facility. A "house mother" and two maids were hired, two cows purchased, a "house father" was chosen from the men to oversee operations for a three-month term, his assistant was appointed, and two men were assigned "cow care" at four dollars per month. The co-operative was formally named The Wakefield House Company and $10,000 in shares at 4 percent interest were sold to raise additional operating capital. Only Finns could be shareholders.

Figure 9. Wakefield *Poika Talo*. (Courtesy Bruce Cox, Wakefield Historical Society)

Last entry of the record, dated January 17, 1932, shows the Endeavor still in operation, though it had not paid interest for several years and the board had discussed the possibility of disbanding. Through the fourteen years detailed in the company records, the internal dynamics of the cooperative household

become evident, as do the adaptations the household made to changing social conditions around it.

One notable feature of this boardinghouse operation was its rate structure. Room and board were charged separately, allowing some residents to room only, and members of the community to buy meals sporadically or regularly. The initial rates were $3.50 to $4.00 monthly for rooms, $6.50 per week for meals. Individually, meals were priced at thirty cents (breakfast) and forty cents (lunch and supper, each).

Rates changed over time to meet cost of living, and money-saving plans sometimes worked, but were often abandoned when they became too much trouble. The boarders raised strong objection to watering down the milk. Not only did the diluting stop, but additional supplies of rich buttermilk were bought. Purchases were made at both the public store and the Finnish co-op, depending upon the better bargain. Raising pigs seems to have been successful; leasing a field and growing their own potatoes was a short-lived venture. The milk cows did not last long either; leasing pasturage for them was costly and shareholders had to be convinced to keep the barn clean.

Other changes—sometimes abrupt—involved hired personnel and management. Within three months of organization, the board of directors had fired the cook/"house mother" for "coarse language." At one point in 1921 the presiding "house mother" announced to the board that she could run the entire operation herself: no "house father" was necessary. The board decided to maintain the status quo. She left. Was she an ardent feminist? Did the board fire her for insubordination? Did she leave for a better offer? The "house father" was reelected, so apparently no one found fault with his conduct. Two years later the entire female staff left simultaneously. Unfortunately, the records do not indicate details of either situation.

The Endeavor's record shows that over time, disciplinary measures became more severe as flagrant rule breaking escalated. An early problem was "prevailing disorder" in the kitchen, not attributed to the kitchen staff but to some of the men apparently indulging in midnight snacks and the like. The records refer periodically to "arguments and disturbances, " men not behaving themselves in the dining areas, and broken rules in general. At first, notices and reminders of rules were posted in the dining room. The board gave reprimands. Later the "house father" became disciplinarian and "harsh measures" were advocated by the board. In the later years, collecting room and board charges was a problem. Numerous accounts were in arrears.

Another set of changes were adaptive responses to the evolving society. After only a year in business (1918), the dining room was attracting so many non-residents that it was serving twice the number of people the dining room could hold. Consequently, the board decided to expand that part of the house. The boardinghouse dining room was not run like the meal-on-demand restaurants; rather, it would serve a single seating for each meal, family-style, i.e., the entire quantity of food was placed on the tables at once and all seated would make their grab for what each considered his or her share. Not knowing how many would show up for any given meal led to much uncertainty both in the kitchen and at table. For this reason the Endeavor's board instituted a policy that neighborhood "regulars" had to either commit to being regulars by buying a week's meal ticket, or they would not be served: they could not just "drop in" and purchase meals at random.

While many of the boardinghouses in the surrounding area were in locations, where most if not all the boarders would be mine employees on the same shifts, and the boardinghouses were proximate to the mines, the "Endeavor" served a fledgling urban neighborhood where people with various employment

and schedules had both the freedom and sometimes the necessity to frequent different establishments for lodging and meals. It was this variety of work schedules, the inconvenience or impossibility of returning home for a meal during the work day, plus the growing social autonomy for young adults in the early twentieth century that Pillsbury (1990: 31) and Wolfe (1913: 38-51) credit with the functional decline of boarding-houses nationally and the increased popularity of rooming houses and restaurants.

No doubt a result of more plentiful employment opportunities in town, an increased presence of women at the dining tables of the Endeavor led in 1925 to a schedule of reduced meal charges for them. Popularity of the automobile also influenced the facilities. By the beginning of 1924 the Endeavor had a garage, for which the board instituted a charge of three dollars per month per car.

Probably most significant of the adaptations made by the commercial Finn boardinghouses was the co-operative format itself. It was a "cultural species," unique to the Great Lakes Finnish communities. It did not transplant well to the Pacific Northwest where concentrations of Finns developed around the fishing and lumbering industries of Washington and Oregon. In Minnesota and Michigan, the co-operative *poika talo* was appealing primarily when juxtaposed to the company-dominated and paternalistic society of the mining regions.

The Finns of Washington and Oregon were not as politically radical as those in the Great Lakes region, however. In fact, argues Walter Mattila (1972: 6), the popular literature produced in these west coast Finntowns "show[s] that most boardinghouse Finns were enthusiastic Rotarians [Main Street Americans]." These Finn boardinghouses were central to the Finnish populations they served, becoming social hubs in the community with a strong family atmosphere (unlike the Endeavor) and offering numerous supportive services

beyond bed and board. Their success on the West Coast, argues Mattila (23), arises from their rejection of the Great Lakes model:

> At one time in pioneer Finntowns when Socialism and Co-operativism courted each other, spirited efforts were made to replace "capitalistic" boardinghouses by those owned and operated by the boarders, them selves. Except for a few lingering ones, they didn't last long because no woman would work as hard for them as for her own business. . . . [and the true value of the house was] the good will from the landlady's hard work and long hours.

Considering the turnover in domestic staff at the Endeavor, Mattila may have a point about a woman working best in her own kitchen. Examining the operation of homes as boardinghouses provides some opportunity to explore that idea further.

Boarding in Family Homes

Boarding in family homes generally involved the fewest boarders per household, but was the most widespread occurrence of the practice. For every one of the Evalyn Cooks or Maria Calliaris who derived her sole support from managing a large, function-specific boarding facility, there were scores of women who took a few boarders into their homes to augment the family income (Chiesa 1993). This form of boarding flourished both in private homes and in the "cookie-cutter neighbor-hoods" of the locations.

The Marquette City and County Directory for 1886-87 again supplies useful information. The residential listings show boarders at 195 separate addresses throughout the city and in the adjoining Rolling Mill Furnace Location. Of these, thirty-four may be specifically identified as commercial establishments. Two additional addresses, with nine and twenty-three boarders respectively, seem also to have been operated as commercial houses. The remaining 159 addresses, or nearly 82 percent of the total boarding venues occupied that year, appear to have been private homes.

Often the numbers of boarders in any household were relatively small, one to five, although ten or more did occur. The prevalence of residential boarding also varied spatially. Across the country as well as in Michigan, areas of most dynamic immigration and industrial growth exhibited a heavier concentration of home-boarding than did the more settled areas, where the influx of single men was less and those who had come earlier had begun to establish their own homes or to move on to other areas (Jensen 1980: 19). For example, historian Russell Magnaghi (1987: 47-8) has noted that among the more settled Italian population in Red Jacket (Calumet) in 1900, the percentage of homes with boarders was roughly half that in Italian homes in the expanding iron communities in Iron and Gogebic Counties.

Magnaghi has also calculated that in 1900, 65 percent of the Italian families in Negaunee took in boarders, the number per household averaging 6.7. In Myer Township, Menominee County that same year, every Italian household but one had boarders, and every one of those boarders was an Italian (1987: 47, 28).

Generally, the boarders were of the same ethnic background as their host family, and in numerous cases, related or at least from the same home community. The 1880 census of Ishpeming includes numerous examples. For instance, the Swedish household of Andrew and Minnie Sunblat included their three-month-old son and five male boarders. In the home of Antoine Novalle, a French-Canadian, lived his wife Harriet, their four daughters, ages five, three, two, and one month, Antoine's brother, nine additional male boarders, and an eighteen-year-old female servant.

Gwinn, CCI's model town on the Marquette Range, had neither company nor commercial boardinghouses in its master plan. Its homes, however, held boarders. According to the 1910 Federal Census, forty-nine residences included at least one boarder. In nearly three-quarters of these homes, the ethnicity of the

boarder(s) matched that of the host(s). Where they differed (thirteen homes), it was minimally: Finns and Norwegians with Swedes and Americans, Danes with English.

In seven of the forty-nine, the occupation of the female head of household is recorded as "boardinghouse keeper." Two cases are women alone: one, a forty-two-year-old widow with two children (thirteen and eighteen) was boarding eight men in her home on Jasper Street. Possibly these boarders provided her entire income, though it is impossible to say with certainty.

In the other case, a forty-one-year-old Finnish widow with three children (five, twelve and sixteen years old) had one boarder. It is unlikely that the income from this one boarder supported her and her children.

In the five remaining households specified as boardinghouses, the male heads of household pursued occupations from carpenter to brakeman, so boarding provided a second income. Which partner generated what proportion of the household income is not as clear. That most households depended upon at least two incomes, however, is evident from the boardinghouse data.

In Gwinn, twenty of the boarding households, about 40 percent, housed a single boarder. An Italian family housed the highest number of boarders in town (ten), while two Finnish families included seven and nine boarders into their respective households. In the largest of the boarding households, however, family still outnumbered the boarders. A French-Canadian merger brought together his kids and her kids (eleven of them between five and thirty years old) with six boarders, including the one-month-old daughter of one young boarder, for a total household population of nineteen.

Economics of Boarding in Family Homes

The primary motive for boarding outsiders in one's home was almost always economic. An extra room or even a loft could bring in a bit of extra

income, though some houses were specifically modified to accommodate additional boarders. When expansion was not feasible, people simply "doubled up" or the family took the lesser portion of the house. Sheets or blankets hung in a room shared by host family and boarders provided some degree of privacy. Double-shifting at the mines meant two sets of boarders could use one set of beds. On occasion, boarders shared a bed with a member of the host family, or family children were relegated to the floor so boarders could occupy their beds (Symon 1985, Boggio 1982)).

Mary Zager's husband Mat had worked for C&H for about eighteen months when he was killed in a rockfall. Just two months before, they had bought a house on company land. Mary received monthly assistance from the county and free fuel from the company, but it was not enough to make ends meet, so she and her sons, a two-year-old and a newborn, moved into the two upstairs rooms of the house and for the next eight years she rented out the three rooms downstairs (Lankton 1991: 192-93).

Couples earmarked boarding income for extra family expenses or as savings for a farm or business. Boarding income also eased the inevitable slack times in a boom-bust industry. In the Hermansville home of Angelo and Mary Arduin and their nine children, income from fifteen to eighteen boarders paid the food and housing expenses for the Arduin family, allowing them to eventually purchase a farm (Whitens and Campbell 1983).

In the case of one couple who parlayed their boardinghouse money into a family business, the enterprise came initially as a bit of a shock to the wife. Teresa Lucas and her three small sons stayed behind in Croatia when her husband Matt went off to the copper mines of Michigan. By 1883, however, she and the children joined him on the Keweenaw. Her intention was that the family would remain for a year or so, and then return to Croatia with the fruits of Matt's labor. Matt had other ideas.

When Teresa arrived in her new home, a small log cabin Matt had leased near the Osceola Mine, she found twelve Slovenian miners whom Matt had obligingly pre-registered as boarders. Once Teresa understood the profit potential, she rolled up her sleeves and began managing a household of seventeen. Within two years she had saved six hundred dollars. With that, the family bought its own log cabin in Raymbaultown and Matt went to work for C&H. Teresa added two rooms and took in additional boarders.

In 1890, seven years after coming to Michigan, Teresa had put aside enough to buy the family a fine, large home in the center of Calumet. Not content to rest from her eighteen-hour days (and the births of eight more sons), "Teresa saw a means of getting Matt on the surface for good. Tearing out all the downstairs partitions of their home, they wrestled a 25-foot bar through the doorway and, in the fall of 1891, the Lucas saloon opened for business." It catered to Croatian and Slovenian mining families: children were allowed; gambling and drunkenness were not (Frimodig 1990: 75-7).

Although dramatic, Teresa Lucas' story is not unique. Even a professional woman found time and energy for boarders. Anna Maria (Mary) Evensen formally trained in both Swedish massage and midwifery and was certified in each when she immigrated from Norway to Michigan in 1885. In Newberry she encountered Axel Fellman, an old flame who was then employed by the railroad. They married and Mary took boarders into their home. Axel was later transferred to Marquette. They bought a large Victorian home there which soon filled with their four children and more of Mary's Swedish boarders. College educations and professional careers for the children were family priorities made possible through Mary's earnings.

Meanwhile, Mary had also established a busy and respected medical practice. Although she saw patients in their own homes, at times a back room in

her home accommodated a couple of extra, temporary boarders in its capacity as a lying-in facility. In her later years as a widow, the children grown and gone, Mary was no "empty nester." To the age of eighty, when she was killed by a car as she crossed the street, she continued both her medical practice and her boardinghouse (Evensen).

Figure 10. Fellman home, Third near Ohio, Marquette, c. 1910. (Courtesy Ovidia Evensen)

Sometimes what began as a casual boarding arrangement eventually developed into a full commercial boarding enterprise. Maria Calliari is but one of the women who followed this economic path. Often it was widowhood that drove women to opening their home to boarders or to expanding the scale of their operations. The potential desperation of widowhood and the ease of mind boarders could provide are simultaneously summed up by Sadie Gilbert's (1987:

76) memory of nineteenth-century family pioneers on the Menominee Range:

My Grandmother Terrill had a boardinghouse for single miners.

> ... My Grandfather Terrill suffered a heart attack while working in the mine and was brought home to die in his own bed. More than ever, my grandmother needed to operate her boarding-house.

As more women came into the developing mining areas, inevitably a number of them became widows who needed support for themselves and often for children. Single women, too, required a means of support. Capitalizing on their domestic skills taking in boarders allowed them to work within their homes (particularly attractive to women with young children or where society frowned on women working in public) and to maintain their household independently.

Private-home boarding, therefore, was not necessarily an end in itself, nor an inconsequential source of "pin money." No matter the number of boarders or the proportion of family income generated by boarders, providing the boarding service was serious business—women's business.

Boardinghouses and the Women's Domestic Economy

At any point during the period 1840 to 1920 more than one-third of the national population was living in a boardinghouse, and well over half the population boarded at some point in their lives. Michigan statistics are consistent with these national figures, and thus the women operating these boardinghouses comprise a significant demographic group engaged in a crucial social and economic enterprise.

It is important to note here that although most studies of boardinghouse life and operation assume a female boardinghouse keeper, on the northern Michigan mining frontier, boardinghouse operation involved numerous men. Families, or at least husband-wife teams, frequently ran the big company houses. In many cases, the men also worked for the mining company, so much of the

actual housework and supervision fell to the women, but nevertheless the man, as head of household, was ultimately responsible to the company for the operation of the house. Occasionally, however, the man took complete charge of managing the house, even to doing much or all of the cooking.

Boarding in private households also involved some men, again as head of household, though it seems in this category there were far fewer instances of male participation. When a husband or father was part of the household, he was likely to leave the home operation entirely in his wife or daughter's hands while he pursued his own occupation, thus producing two totally separate incomes from two distinct earners. Women's income derived from home-based activities has historically posed problems of measurement and interpretation, often being ignored. Men's income has been recognized regardless of source; rarely has women's if it was generated in the home.

The importance of this national domestic economy in general, and of those women who kept boarders in particular, has only recently been realized. For decades, economic studies have focused on wage labor, perceived as virtually divorced from the home as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution. A concomitant perception defined domestic labor, housework, as "non-productive," that is, aimed at satisfying home consumption but not producing anything for the larger marketplace (Mackintosh 1979). Consequently, the American family's economic picture became distorted, deceptively portraying the male head of household, working outside the house, as the family's sole support and obscuring the image of women as economic partners in the home-workplace.

Among the correctives to these ideas, Leonore Davidoff (1979) points to the boardinghouse as a basic contradiction to the notion of work separated from home; instead it merges the two, expanding household labor into the realm of service for an outside market.

Exploring household production for market, Joan Jensen (1980) cites various home-based textile-producing ventures by rural, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women and the lucrative boardinghouse operations of urban women of the same period.

Several of Jensen's points support this study. The widespread occurrence of boardinghouses and the economic importance of boarding income are clear. So, too, is the dependence of many families on at least two incomes. Preliminary studies from working-class towns in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New York suggest that only about half the households relied solely on the husband's earnings. A government study of Johnstown, Pennsylvania just after the turn of the century determined that "fewer than a third of all immigrant households drew their entire income from the husband's earnings" (Daniels 1990: 236).

Of the additional sources of income, contributions from the wife's domestic earnings figured most predominantly. Michigan sources repeat this pattern: census data and community directories show boarding to be the rule rather than the exception.

Among the studies Jensen cites is an examination of 4,559 working-class households in New York in 1904 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor. In this study, "women provided 32 to 35 percent of the gross family income. . . . [I]ncome from boarders was 37 percent of the husband's income in native-born and 43 percent of the husband's income in foreign-born households," reflecting both the proportionally greater numbers of boarders in foreign-born households and the generally lower wages of foreign- versus native-born men in many industries (factors Knowles [1920] also emphasizes—see below). Jensen further notes that "even in native-born families, [boarding income] could pay for the house rent, clothing, and part of the fuel while the husband's income could cover the largest expenditure, that of food, and other incidental expenses" (19-20).

Unfortunately, there are no comparable studies of household income for the Michigan mining regions that would allow a point by point comparison. However, figures from the Mat and Teresa Lucas household (above) do provide enough information to calculate a general budget and to make at least a single-case comparison to Jensen's conclusions.

When Teresa arrived in 1883, Mat's daily wage was $1.25. Working a six-day week for a full year (unusual, since temporary shut-downs were common), Mat's annual income would be $390. Teresa's dozen boarders were each paying three dollars per month for room and board (a remarkably low figure, even for the time—possibly a weekly rate misremembered), bringing in $432 and exceeding her husband's income by about 10 percent. At the end of two years at these figures, Teresa had saved six hundred dollars. Assuming that was done at a steady rate, of the annual $432, three hundred was saved. Thus the figures say the Lucas family maintained a household of seventeen on a combined expenditure of $522 annually, understanding that personal items for the boarders would be purchased by them, not the Lucases.

In a housing census of 1913, the Osceola Mine owned seventy-nine log houses, the majority of which rented for four dollars per month. The most expensive (ten rooms) rented for six dollars (Committee 1913: 15). Assuming the Lucas family was renting one of the cheaper cabins (a ten-room home would not have been available to a general laborer), and that the costs were not substantially different in 1883 from what they were thirty years later, the Lucas family spent forty-eight dollars for housing in each of the two years they rented the Osceola house. Taking the rent and the savings from Teresa's boarding income leaves eighty-four dollars annually for clothing (for the five in the Lucas family at that time) and fuel—more than enough, allowing for hand-me-downs and home knitting and considering shoes could be had for under two dollars a pair, shirts for

half that (even less if made at home), and the mining companies supplied employees' homes with scrap wood and coal at nominal charges.

According to the budgetary breakdown in Jensen, that leaves Mat's income of $390 to cover food costs for seventeen people for a year, or roughly one dollar per day, allowing a few dollars for incidentals. While stretching a single dollar to feed seventeen people three meals may seem impossible, it actually could be done given the frontier context of the Lucas family.

One clear distinction made by Jensen's argument and the data from which she draws is an agrarian rural society where households met subsistence needs and produced extra for the marketplace, versus an urban setting for boarding-houses where home production of the family foods was not feasible.

On the Michigan mining frontier, however, the latter was not the case. Whether in a location in the 1860s or in a town such as Wakefield in the 1920s, large gardens and livestock were the norm for dwellings of whatever type, and mining companies made additional pasturage and agricultural plots available for nominal fees. The Batista Perona family of Calumet, for example, maintained ten or twelve cows on a farm four miles outside of town (Bono 1982) and used the yard of the family home on Laurium Street (Figure 11) as what Stewart-Abernathy (1986) describes as a small urban farmstead. Often in such cases, fences were considered more important to controlling the cows than to beautifying the landscape, though it was not unusual for animals to mosey about, unrestrained.

At the Mohawk Location boardinghouse, the farmstead was even more elaborate, including pigs, cows, and chickens as well as prodigious amounts of produce. The matron of the house, abandoned with five dependent children, relied upon home-production to make ends meet and received help from her twenty-two boarders with the livestock and in the garden (Boggio 1982).

Figure 11. Batista Perona house, Laurium Street, Calumet. (Marquette County Historical Society)

Moreover, large tracts of natural terrain lay between or adjacent to settlements. Women and children spent entire days picking wild berries for canning; families sometimes turned berrying into an over-night camping excursion (Mansfield 1973, Bernhardt 1981: 121). Wild game and fish supplemented home larders for no more expense than a bullet or a bit of fish bait. Families or community co-operatives regularly made sausage, butter, and cheese at home from home-produced raw materials (Magnaghi 1987, Dozzi 1982, Boggio 1982). Purchasing in bulk also cut food costs. With very careful management, exploiting the agricultural subsistence patterns she had practiced on the home farm in Croatia, Teresa Lucas could have fed her household spending only about one dollar per day.

One crucial difference between the strictly urban context for boarding-house operation cited by Jensen and the frontier context is thus pointed up by this example. Another difference lies in the other employment options available

for women besides servicing boarders. Domestic service and work in the clothing industry, especially as dressmakers or milliners, were options in both urban areas and on the mining frontier, though limited by the number of women with sufficient disposable income to afford these luxuries. (The Mme. Buddahs found or created their own employment niches.)

However, one major employment source for nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women in urban settings generally unavailable to the Michigan frontier women was factories. Few factories existed in the mining region for much of the boardinghouse era, and even where there were jobs for women—such as in the short-lived overall factory near Calumet, Lavorini's Macaroni Factory in Hancock, bakeries, or the bean cannery in Hermansville—there were far too few to provide an economic base for the numbers of women needing support. In addition, cultural restrictions against women working outside the home also closed options for many women (Magnaghi 1987: 47-8, Giorgetti 1983, Davidoff 1979: 85, Centanino 1983).

The dominant venues of employment in the western Michigan U.P., mining and lumbering, were male domains as clearly as boarding-houses were female, though minimal cross-over did occur in the big company boardinghouses, and saloon proprietors were generally male.

On the other hand, of 4,365 C&H employees in 1913, only twenty-eight were female. They were assigned to the hospital, library, and the women's bathhouse (Lankton 1991: 191). Therefore, although Jensen contends urban women often chose boardinghouse keeping over factory work because it was more lucrative (20), the women on Michigan's mining frontier took in boarders because there was a high demand for the service, the women had few other employment options, and boarding was a respectable, domestic occupation.

Significantly, the Michigan mining frontier data disputes another of

Jensen's conclusions, i.e., that "the goal of women's household production remained to make ends meet rather than to consciously make profits." Further, she contends that "household production was a stage between subsistence and wage labor that did not lead to entrepreneurship. . . . Thus . . . [household production] was not transitional to capitalism for individual women" where controlling the means of production is her capitalistic criterion (21).

Based upon the urban data Jensen examined, her conclusion may be valid, but certainly Teresa Lucas' achievements counter the general argument. Clearly it was her boardinghouse income that bought the family's Raymbaultown home which she then used to earn the money that bought the Calumet house and set the family up in the saloon business. Teresa Lucas was certainly a capitalist. But was she unique, either in financing the family's home purchase from boardinghouse profits, or in owning the means of her domestic production? Additional data say no.

In 1908, Margaret F. Byington undertook a study of the homes and families in the Pennsylvania mill town of Homestead. She found boarding to be means of economic survival for the English-speaking widows and that among the Slavic laborers, boarding "is a deliberate business venture on the part of the family to increase the inadequate income from the man's earnings" (1910: 144). Making ends meet was not the sole objective of these immigrant women, however, as Byington also points out that "much of the burden of buying the home falls on the housewife. She must make the needed economies if the extra money is to be forthcoming . . ." (60).

Richard Harris (1992: 350) cites four major studies of housing among immigrant populations in Chicago that show boarding income as the means to home ownership. He further notes that in a 1990 "study of Vandergrift, Pennsylvania, Anne Mosher has found that this strategy was common to

native-born workers as well." She suggests that up to the Depression, "all kinds of workers" relied on boarding income "to realize their dream of home owner-ship"—a trend Harris recognizes among the middle-class of Toronto up to the 1950s.

Numerous Michigan boardinghouse keepers besides Teresa Lucas also owned their homes and/or produced more than secondary incomes from their boarding enterprises. *The Marquette City and County Directory 1886-87* identifies eighteen widows operating boarding establishments, at least three of which were commercial houses. Only four of the eighteen (and none with the known com-mercial houses) had only a single boarder, and one of these four was also a prac-ticing midwife. Boarders, therefore, likely provided most if not all the household income for over three-fourths of the known boardinghouse widows in Marquette that year.

The longevity of some of these boarding enterprises documented in Marquette city and county directories covering the period 1886 through 1929 indicates the success of their operation. For at least the two decades prior to her death in 1906, the widow Mary Shea served boarders in her home at 140 Champion. The James L. Cuddahee/Cuddahy household included boarders at several addresses. James, a local carpenter, his wife Sarah, and boarders are list-ed at 110 N. 5th in 1891. Three years later the Cuddahees had shifted to 156 W. Superior where they remained until about 1898, after which they are shown at 122 W. Washington. Widowed in 1906, Sarah managed the Washington Street boardinghouse by herself until shortly before her death in 1908.

Meanwhile, two of the boarding properties once operated by the Cuddahees were taken over by others. In 1886 the W. J. Shaw Boardinghouse operated on Washington Street. By 1901, the widow Anna Shaw had relocated to 110 N. 5th where she accommodated boarders for two more decades. In 1920,

she advertised "furnished rooms" rather than boarding accommodations. Her advancing age, perhaps, or the public's developing preference for rooming over boarding may account for the change in her business. She continued at the same address through 1925.

By 1899 the Fleming sisters, Kate and Nora, had taken over the former Cuddahee home at 156 W. Superior and continued its operation as a boardinghouse. They relocated to a Washington Street address sometime before 1905 and Kate maintained the boarding facility without evidence of Nora from 1908 through at least 1917. In 1920, Kate Fleming was still keeping a boardinghouse, though by that point she had moved to 134 W. Ridge. The 1925 and 1929 city directories show her still at that address.

Annie Gilling, a widow, operated a boardinghouse at 150 W. Ohio by 1905 and at 119 E. Park from 1908 to 1920, when she "removed to Detroit." George Grieninger's German Hotel accommodated boarders from at least 1886. Mary, George's widow, assumed command of the hotel prior to 1905, remaining proprietress to her death in 1919.

Elsewhere on the iron ranges, a Mrs. F. B. Lorber advertised for sale her commercial boardinghouse, the Miner's Home, at the Fink Location near Wakefield (Cox 1983: 36). At Rockland, Anna Wiesen owned her own boardinghouse and supported herself, her granddaughter, and her invalid husband with her earnings (Fortin 1994).

These few, but representative examples demonstrate that beyond augmenting household income from other sources, several of northern Michigan's boardinghouse matrons did indeed own and profitably operate their boarding establishments.

Boardinghouse Overhead—Staffing

More than the wage labor of miners, boardinghouse operation entailed numerous expenses for overhead. Some of that overhead has already been acknowledged: house rent, food, laundry, fuel. Private homes or privately-owned establishments also had to bear the cost of furnishing, heating, and repairs assumed by the mining companies for their facilities.

One additional cost for both private or company managers, however, was staff. Large houses for scores or hundreds of men demanded extra staff, and even in family homes with a handful of boarders, servants became a common addition to the household. Thus the boardinghouse keepers both contributed to the national economy through their domestic earnings and buying power, and also comprised a significant employer group as well. Therefore, boarding-houses were not only a center of domestic service production; they were also the venue for wage income.

Not all boardinghouses included hired staff, of course. In many instances they were simply not needed. In other instances, family members helped out, sometimes even to the point of eliminating the need for hired staff altogether. For example, a Mrs. Reippenen had seven daughters to help her run the Wakefield Iron Company boardinghouse while her husband worked in the mine (Johnson 1993). Ida Schmidt's husband and four children lent assistance at the Delta Chemical and Iron boardinghouse (figure 27) (Mather 1994).

Census records indicate that live-in servants, usually young females, frequently met the need for extra domestic help. In the household of Antoine Novalle, mentioned above, his wife Harriet clearly needed extra help, with an infant and three other young children plus eleven men requiring food and laundry. Typically such live-in help received room and board as part of their compensation.

Additional hands were not always conveniently available, however, particularly in frontier communities. One perspective boardinghouse keeper for the Victoria Copper Mining Company wrote: "I am very sorry to tell you that in regard to the scarsity [sic] of help we are unable to find them in sufficient number to permit us to take over your boardinghouse" (VCM Files, Hooper correspondence). The board of the Endeavor also had periodic difficulty finding candidates for the "house mother" or her helpers (Wakefield).

In her communications with the Victoria in 1918, Evalyn Cook anticipated how short-handed she might be in the new endeavor and suggested that she "can get help that is responsible to take with [her]" including her father who could do handy-man chores and another "widow lady" from Paris that would share the expenses and the work load.

Such collaboration was not unusual: Selma Wiljanen augmented her family income with boarders until the death of her husband, at which time she became uncomfortable having unmarried men in her home. For a while she tried to support herself and her three daughters through domestic work, but finally went into partnership with another woman running a boardinghouse (Larson 1988-94).

The Gabourie sisters of Princeton ran the boardinghouse for the Stegmiller Mine for years, and later operated a boardinghouse for teachers in the model community of Gwinn (Gabourie File). Of course, the ultimate of collaborations, husband-wife teams, managed numerous boardinghouses. But even such collaborations of management did not rule out hiring additional staff, expanding the influence of boardinghouse managers.

Some of the boardinghouses included male staff members. Male African-Americans in Houghton County in the 1860s found employment as cooks in the boardinghouses (Thurner 1994; 140). During the 1920s the day cook, head night

cook, and the bull cook (midnight shift) of a Sagola boardinghouse complex were men; women filled the other staff positions (Ertel 1986: 77). Martin Rogan, a pioneer settler of Crystal Falls, was a cook for miners before he built his own boardinghouse (Miller 1981: 47). If local women were available, however, they usually had no difficulty finding boardinghouse employment. With few opportunities for female employment available, domestic service in a boardinghouse was an attractive proposition, despite the excruciating demands of the job and the pitifully low pay.

A survey of boardinghouse workers in Minnesota in 1918 revealed that the women

> averaged almost seventy-five hours of work per week; some even worked in excess of one hundred hours. All of the female boardinghouse employees listed in the survey worked seven days a week and received, on the average, a weekly wage of $7.55, or 10 cents an hour. (Alanen 1989: 177)

Figure 12. Staff at the Stephenson boardinghouse, Wells. (Courtesy Delta County Historical Society)

Weekly pay was less than half that in Michigan houses when room and board was supplied. At the I. Stephenson Boardinghouse near Escanaba, the staff's workdays began at five o'clock in the morning and lasted about seventeen hours, seven days a week. Pay was three dollars per week plus room and board (Bourke 1982).

Work activities for boardinghouse staff included cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing laundry, waiting on tables, dishwashing, making beds, and emptying slops pails, plus other necessary activities such as hauling water, gardening, milking cows, feeding chickens, canning or butter-making, filling and tending lamps, sewing and mending.

There were a number of consequences from this practice of hiring young ladies as boardinghouse staff. First, additional women in the community were brought into the wage labor market and empowered in whatever opportunities their particular situation might allow. Second, they experienced on-the-job training, using what domestic training they had acquired at home plus the experience in the boardinghouse to develop a marketable skill such as Evalyn Cook, Selma Wiljanen, and others had been able to do. Third, what was often a brief period between employment and marriage stimulated turn-over, opening up positions to new candidates on a reasonably regular basis.

Local girls did not always fill these positions, even if they were available. The chain migration pattern on the Great Lakes mining frontier usually began with the single male as the first link. Another pattern, however, began with the boardinghouse matron as the first link. Certain matrons capitalized on their positions as potential employers to encourage and even finance the immigration of female friends and relatives, and then to employ them and look out for them after their arrival. Teresa Lucas, for example, brought over eighty such women (Frimodig 1990: 75). If the sister or cousin or niece should meet a nice fellow—in

the boardinghouse or not—and settle into her own home, so much the better.

Because of the availability of these women, men who had come over to the mines to earn their stake as sojourners, stayed and became Americans instead. Then, like the Antoine Novalles, they boarded their fellow countrymen, brothers and sisters who immigrated after them. Others, intending to stay, found brides at the boardinghouse and then set up housekeeping, taking in a couple of boarders themselves.

As the Michigan mining area developed, companies phased out the single-men boardinghouses and placed their resources and corporate philosophy behind establishing single-family homes and planned communities, promoting what they believed would become a self-fulfilling prophecy: happy, healthy, and loyal employees. After World War I, tightened immigration policies and better economic opportunities elsewhere caused a decline in population in the region. Decreased numbers of private boardinghouses accommodated the dwindling numbers of single workers.

Ironically, the best of the boardinghouse managers contributed to the declining need for their services while simultaneously increasing their competition. Their domestic earnings helped stimulate local economies. They provided training and created employment for both local women and foreign women whom they encouraged to immigrate. Those women, in turn, became wage earners, further stimulating the economy, and then married the mining workers, helping for a while to stabilize the male work force, and taking in boarders, perpetuating the cycle.

CHAPTER 6

THE BOARDINGHOUSE AS MATERIAL CULTURE

Physical details of the boardinghouses varied considerably and individual structures were subject to alteration over time; thus no specific layout or elevation is "typical." Compounding the task of describing and analyzing the physical boardinghouses is a lack of detailed physical evidence. A few houses remain in varying states of decay or modification, or merely as overgrown footings or cellar holes, and even these scanty remains are inconsistently documented. Archaeological findings are limited.

Documentary evidence, often only a single exterior photograph or a "footprint" on a fire insurance map, generally hints more than reveals. There are few floorplans or blueprints. Personal recollections tend to focus on minutiae or to ignore the physical details for the social experience. In some cases all that remains is a name someone remembers once hearing from a family member, or a vague reference in a diary or letter. Taken together, however, the evidence suggests that some consistency did arise in general forms if not necessarily in particular detail.

While certainly practical considerations relating to function, cost, availability of materials, and technological levels impacted on design and construction, as Hall (1969), Wright (1981), Altman and Chemers (1980), Oliver (1987), Sanders (1990), Lawrence (1990) and others suggest, the house is also an architectural response to social ideas such as privacy and status. Moreover, boardinghouses as material culture exist within a geographic and social context. As

153

Fleming's model (1982) argues, examination of the physical boardinghouse needs to address each of these considerations. While the uneven nature of the evidence, one house versus another, precludes a full Fleming analysis for each boardinghouse, the data available defines a range of materials, dimensions, and architectural features; gives a sampling of interior arrangement and furnishing; and shows the placement of the boardinghouses in relation to the other structures of the communities. After noting these physical facts it is possible to draw conclusions regarding their meaning in economic, technological and social context.

<u>Building the Boardinghouse—Materials</u>

It seems that boarding accommodations in Michigan's Upper Peninsula have been constructed of most every material available in the area, from animal hide and tree bark to canvas, logs, timber and brick. The first recorded boardinghouse in the Marquette area, for instance, was known to early missionaries and miners as the Bawgam House. It was the large cedar bark wigwam of Charlie Kabawgam, a local Chippewa, who raised the sail canvas doorway covering to admit numerous boarders in the early 1840s before Marquette was founded (Franklin 1977).

An early traveler to Copper Harbor recorded his arrival May 26, 1845, and his relief at finding a boardinghouse there:

> Copper Harbor and torrents of cold spring rain today. Found refuge at the Astor, a pine log boardinghouse one and a half stories tall. Has a dining room and kitchen and long table made by two boards laid upon horses. Each guest has a space on the main floor to spread his mat and buffalo robe. A sumptuous dinner of smoked ham, butter, fresh bread and potatoes served. (*And in whose hills* . . . 1994: 7)

Recollections of early Sault Ste. Marie, a city outside the mining area specifically but affected by its growth nonetheless, note that rapid expansion of

the community was accommodated by a tent city in 1887 that included numerous boardinghouses as well as family homes and stores (I remember when—1923:18, Osborn [1888]). Such temporary and ephemeral housing has left virtually no physical evidence.

Log Structures

Where mining activities were the impetus to opening a wilderness area, company boardinghouses were among the first structures at a site. Housing labor presented an immediate necessity; gaining access to the land presented an immediate problem. Both were often addressed initially through clear-cutting the site of the mining operation: logs became immediately available for timbering the mine, for simple structures, and possibly for corduroy roads until better could be constructed. In some cases, then, the Michigan mining frontier replicated the familiar pattern among agricultural pioneers: a rudimentary log cabin eventually replaced by a more spacious, frame dwelling.

In this regard, the level of boardinghouse structural sophistication hinged more specifically on availability of milling and on company policies than on the date of construction. For example, the Harlow complex at Marquette (figure 13) predates the Dolan House (figure 14) by nearly twenty years and already reflects a generation of structural evolution. The Harlows, the founding family of the Marquette Iron Mining Company, established their initial crude home in 1849 in an abandoned fisherman's shack, replacing it with the boardinghouse and hospital complex shown here (constructed with lumber from their own mill) over the next few years (Harlow 1849-59, Harlow 1972).

On the other hand, the Gogebic Iron Range was not developed until the 1880s. The boardinghouse accommodation at Bessemer is shown only months after operations began at the Colby Mine in 1884 (Sell 1990). As rudimentary as
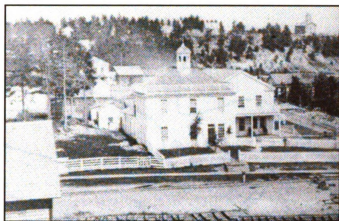
Figure 13. Harlow boardinghouse and hospital addition, Marquette, c. 1863. (Marquette County Historical Society)

Figure 14. The Dolan House, Colby Mine, Bessemer, May, 1885. (Marquette County Historical Society)
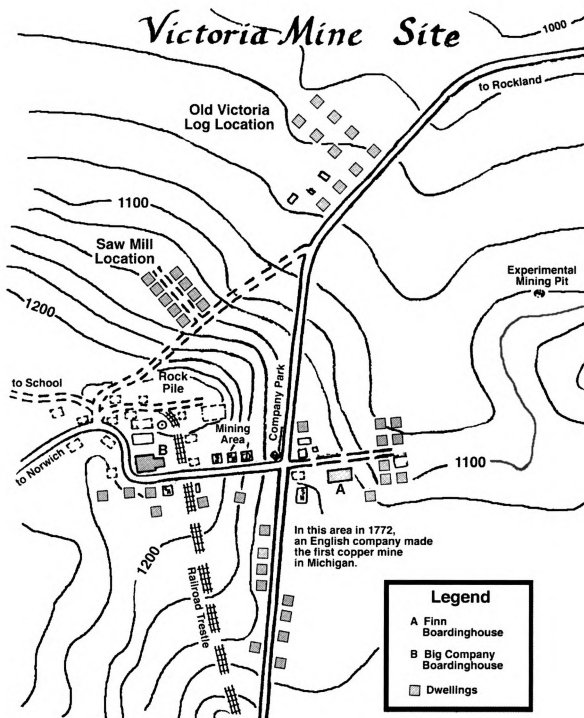
Figure 15. Plan of Victoria Mine, locations, and surrounding area. (Courtesy Pat Thorgren, Society for Restoration of Old Victoria)

this structure appears, others were less satisfactory. In the first surge of building at the Menominee Range's Chapin and Vulcan mines in 1879-80, the men's boardinghouses were large log structures, so crude in appearance that the wife of the superintendent of the Menominee Mining Company confused a boarding-house with a chicken coop! (Dulan 1973: 37).

Log construction was not necessarily a precursor to frame building, how-ever. Many boardinghouses were originally stick-framed and sided with wood. Nor were company-built log homes automatically replaced by stick-framed structures, even when milled lumber was available and employed for other mine buildings including housing. A 1913 inventory of dwellings owned by the cop-per companies in the strike district shows 278 log homes of from three to ten rooms, and 3061 frame dwellings of two to twelve rooms, the majority in both groups being five rooms (Committee 1913).

Moreover, log construction techniques varied. Besides the traditional round logs notched and crossed at the corners, many log structures were laid up of dovetailed squared logs, chinked, and then the interior walls were plastered. Exterior walls were sometimes sided with clapboards. The finished effect resem-bled a frame structure, but with exceptionally thick walls (McNear 1978: 518).

Many of the log homes have disappeared, but evidence from two mining locations gives some notion of how these cabins were built, and company and census records attest to the fact that even the smallest and crudest of such cabins housed boarding workers along with the resident families.

Cabins at Victoria. After a false start in the 1850s, the Victoria copper mine began operations anew at the turn of the century and established a location near the mine to house its workers (figure 15). Single men were accommodated in the large company boardinghouse at the mine head (figure 7) and in several
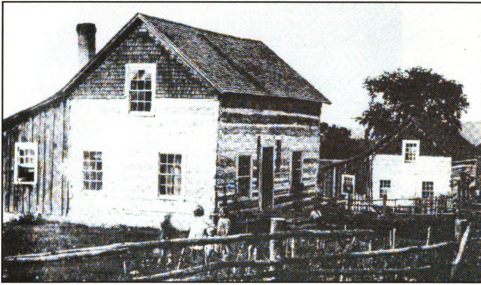
Figure 16. Log homes at Victoria Mine, c. 1910. (Courtesy Pat Thorgren, Society for Restoration of Old Victoria)

others in the general area, while family men used company houses including cabins built in the "lower location," i.e., a cluster of housing down the hill from the mine complex along the road to the nearest town, Rockland, four miles away ("two miles down, two miles up") (Johanson 1993).

Photos of these cabins from about 1910 (figure 16) and other documentary evidence have assisted in their on-going restoration.

One of those restored cabins is used here to illustrate the rest, there being only slight variance between them. The lower story, approximately twenty-six feet by sixteen feet and divided into three rooms, is substantially built of clay-chinked squared logs. The cooking, eating, and sitting areas comprise about half the main floor. The two bedrooms can hold little more than a double bed each (figure 18). Running the width of the cabin is a single-story attached board-and-batten summer kitchen likely also used for laundry, canning, and storage, particularly of fire wood. A small pantry or "buttery" is tucked under the narrow stairway. There are no sinks or toilets, but a natural spring and privies were nearby.

Figure 17. Interior of one restored log home, Old Victoria; a. cook stove, b. upstairs beds
(Photos by Ron Stofer)
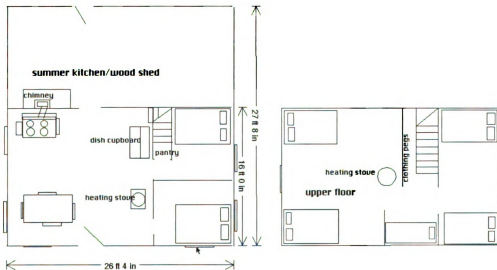
Laborer cabin, Victoria Location, c. 1910

Figure 18. Floorplan of restored log home, Old Victoria. (By author)

Upstairs are two separate rooms each large enough for three double beds, plus a single bed tucked under the eave at the head of the stairs (Figure 17b). Pegs in the wall of the narrow landing next to the stairway held clothing. Other personal items could be stored on the narrow ledge formed by the knee-wall. No matter a family's size, taking in boarders at the company's behest was a condition of employment at Victoria. As many as sixteen people occupied these homes of little more than eight hundred square feet (Johanson 1993: 37).

Cabins at Fayette. Evidence of workers' cabins has also come to light at Fayette, site of a smelting operation of the Jackson Iron Company during the 1870s and 80s. None still stand, but a single photo (figure 19) and archaeological work by Dr. Patrick Martin of Michigan Technological University provide some information about these dwellings.

Remnants of foundations indicate that they were fourteen feet by twenty-eight feet, or just under four hundred square feet. They were built of pine logs chinked with lime and plastered inside. Apparently there were few if any interior division walls. Lack of evidence of a hearth suggests that the chimney was

Figure 19. Workers' cabins at Fayette. (Courtesy Michigan Historical Museum)

suspended. The photo shows these cabins as single story, perhaps with a loft, but one, designated as "House I," may have been built as a duplex. At the site designated as "House II," Martin discovered a shallow three-foot by four-foot double-walled root cellar insulated with charcoal (manufactured at Fayette for the smelting operation). The cache-hole was presumably reached via trap door through the floor (Martin 1993, 1994).

Federal census records for 1880 show that boarders were a standard feature in these workers' households: families of four to six made provision for at least one or two boarders—a fact that stretches a contention used by Hardesty (1988) in estimating population in Western mining towns, i.e., that no more than six people will occupy a home of 350 square feet.

Frame Construction

Frame construction ultimately became the style of choice once milling operations made lumber accessible, and the boardinghouses illustrate the flexibility of size and configuration that construction method allowed.

Figure 20. Spies Location boardinghouse for CCI managers , c. 1916. (Courtesy Cliffs Mining Services Company)

Figure 21. Carothers boardinghouse at their lumber mill, Yalmer. (Marquette County
      Historical Society)

    Company boardinghouses. Company boardinghouses ranged from very
modest structures such as the Spies boardinghouse in figure 20, built by
Cleveland-Cliffs for managerial staff, to the imposing three-story accommoda-
tion at Victoria after additions made about 1916 (figure 7) and the I. Stephenson
complex at Wells in Delta County (figure 34) that accommodated three hundred
(Bourke 1982: 11). Many included full third floors of bedrooms or a few dormer
rooms in the attic. Common features included verandas and shed-roofed annex-
es (figure 21) which served as vestibules, kitchens, extra sleeping rooms, or
enclosed storage.

    House populations ranged from a dozen or so to several hundred.
Extremely large company boardinghouses meant to accommodate 250-300 men
or more became boarding complexes, entailing several multi-story sleeping
wings, a dining wing, and huge kitchen. For example, the company house at
Sagola began as a two-story structure similar to the Bonnie Location house (fig-
ure 22), accommodating more than a hundred men on two shifts. When demand
increased, the house was expanded by building a duplicate of the original

parallel to it and connecting the two wings across the far ends with an even larger two-story structure containing a huge common dining facility and centralized operating plant (Ertel 1986: 76-7).

Figure 22. Bonnie Location boardinghouse, 1886. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Neg. WHi[x3]41129)

Footprints of the boardinghouses also varied considerably, the alphabet being heavily represented by I-plans, L-plans, and U-plans. The Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company house at the Barnum Location on the west side of Ishpeming was a ten-bedroom T-plan (figures 23, 43).

Other configurations included the four-square and the double-wing (figure 24). In some locations, companies converted former schools or hospitals into boardinghouses when newer public facilities were built (Lankton and Hyde 1982), producing still more variety of plan.

A common boardinghouse configuration was a long, narrow, clapboard-sided two-story frame building with gable roof. This I-plan design, or variations on the theme, was built for decades at many locations besides Bonnie (figures 25-27). Some boardinghouses, such as the I. Stephenson and the Sagola described above, were comprised of such units in multiples.

Figure 23. Barnum House, Herman Elson family and boarders. (Courtesy Eleanor, Cecelia and Marietta Conte)

Figure 24. Double-wing company boardinghouse at Fayette. (Courtesy Michigan Historical Museum)

Downstairs would be a parlor or card/smoking room for the boarders, a large dining room, the kitchen, and at one end, a private apartment for the boardinghouse manager. Upstairs was generally divided into several small rooms, each large enough for a double bed or double bunk and possibly a small dresser or washstand and basin, although as in the Victoria cabins, a shelf and a nail on the back of the door were frequently the only accommodation for each boarder's wardrobe and personal belongings. Their situations suggest little more was needed.

Figure 25. Ewen boardinghouse, 1954. Built c. 1888. (Marquette County Historical Society)

One of these basic boardinghouses would house approximately twenty to thirty men, but with double bunks and sleeping in rotation, i.e., each morning men on the night shift taking over the beds the men on the day shift had just left, the population could swell to sixty or more.

Commercial styles. Besides the company boardinghouses, commercial establishments also provided for boarders. Architecturally they were a varied lot, from cabin and frame house forms to hotel proportions and the commercial
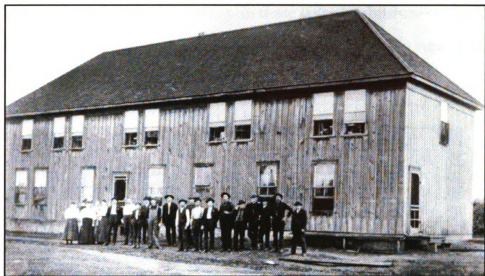
Figure 26. Gabourie boardinghouse, Princeton Location c. 1904. (Marquette County Historical Society)

Figure 27. Delta Chemical and Iron Company boardinghouse, c. 1930. (Courtesy Lillian Mather)

store-fronts in figures 28 and 29 below. In these latter establishments the saloon and kitchen and sometimes proprietor's quarters comprised the street level, with rooms available to boarders upstairs.

Figure 28. Madison House, Marquette. (Marquette County Historical Society)

An example of a commercial boardinghouse more strongly focused on boarders than on the saloon part of the business was the Bay View (figure 30). In 1884 when the William Cordes family purchased the three-story building, it had a saloon on the first floor and sleeping rooms above. Family alterations

Figure 29. Franklin House at 115 W. Superior, Marquette, c. 1899. (Marquette County
Historical Society)
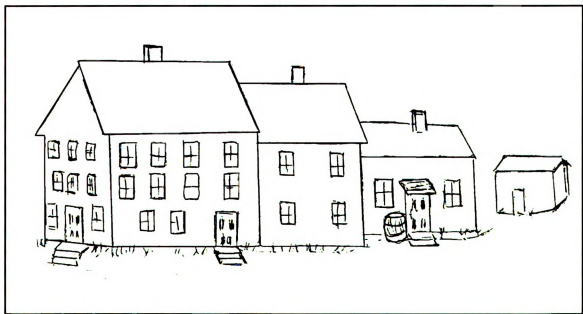
Figure 30. Sketch of the Bay View. (By Alice Knuth)

produced a telescope configuration: they added a two-story structure behind the original building to accommodate a large dining room on the first floor and family quarters above and a single-story kitchen wing behind that (Knuth 1993).

Family home designs. A general feature of location workers' housing, often the venue for boarding, was monotony. Typically these homes were one- or two-story, wood-sided structures. Although a minimal variety in design might appear from one location to another or possibly from one block to another, each block of houses exhibited the identical facade and floorplan with consistent setback and side yard dimensions. Saltboxes, T-plans, L-plans, and telescope

Figure 31. One of two double duplexes, Dober Location. (Photo by Ron Stofer)

houses predominated, all devoid of external ornamentation, although some variation in elevations appeared thanks to Sears Roebuck and other catalogues offering kit houses. Most were single-family dwellings, but duplexes saved on construction costs and were built as well (figure 31).

FIRST FLOOR.

SECOND FLOOR.

Calumet & Hecla Mining Co.
Miners' House 1907.
Plan & Elevations.
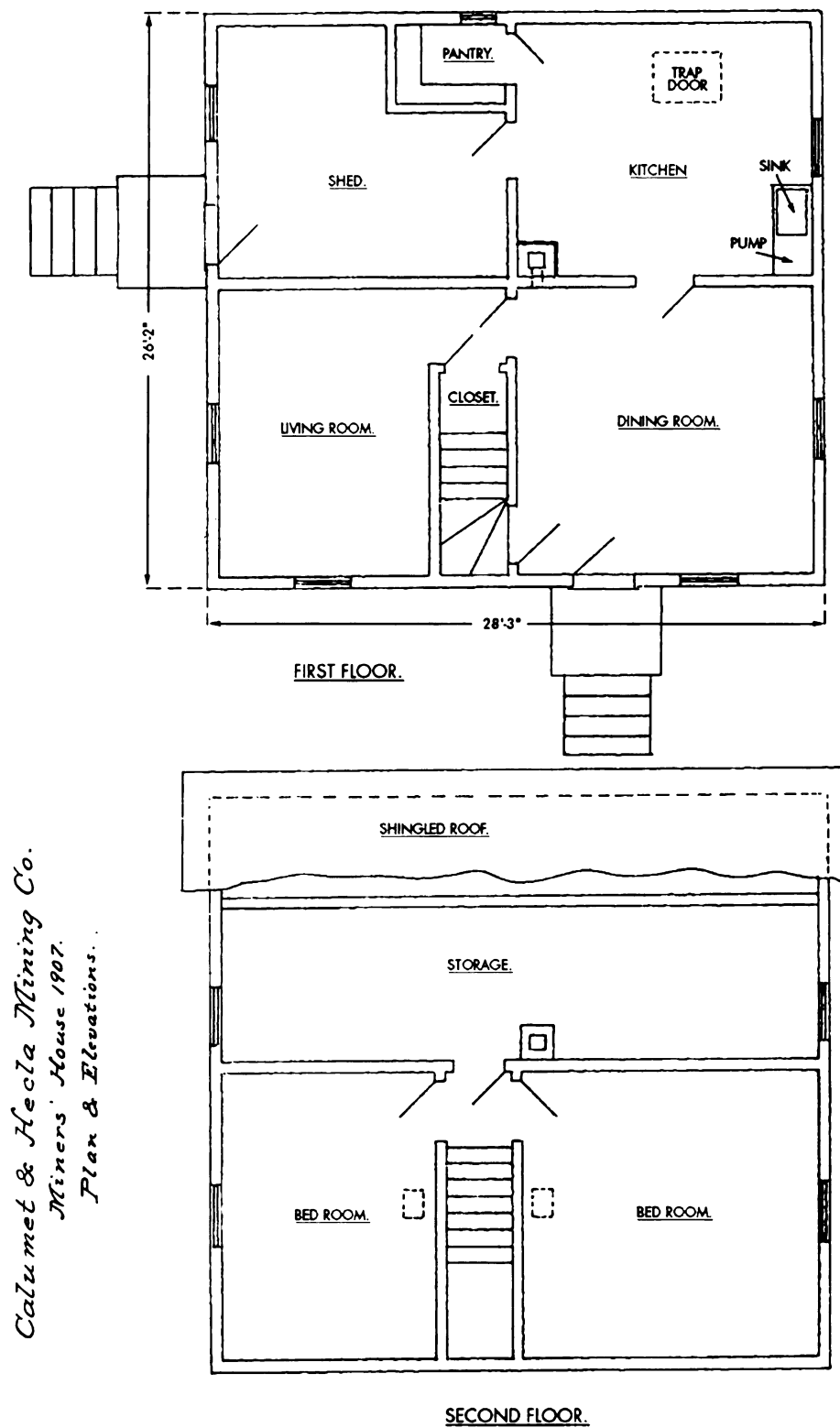
Figure 32. Adapted from Calumet & Hecla House plan #1907. (Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections)

Houses were also painted a uniform color, usually white, grey, or iron red, but neighborhoods weathered to a uniform grey no matter what their original colors when up to fifteen years elapsed between paint applications. Front porches and rear shed extensions were common. Foundations varied.

Calumet and Hecla Company records contain numerous plans and elevations for company buildings of all types. The plan (figure 32) for a five-room saltbox C&H miner's house in 1907 is a rectangle, twenty-six by twenty-eight feet and calls for the house to be supported by eight-inch cedar posts resting on stones. First floor consists of dining room, living room, and kitchen with pantry. A trap door through the kitchen floor presumably leads to a storage area, and a small room adjacent to the kitchen is designated "shed." The fixed sink and water pump are additional features of the kitchen. A single closet is placed under the stairs to the upper floor.

Upstairs is divided into two bedrooms and a full-width storage area under the eaves. Main rooms have eight-foot ceilings. There is a central chimney in a corner of the kitchen, but no fireplace and no apparent central heating. There is also no provision for a bathroom. Each downstairs room has two windows; the bedrooms have one each. Small uncovered landings and pine steps provide egress from the house through the dining room and the shed.

Company management lived in more elaborate and personalized homes, evident both from extant examples and through examination of house plans in mining company files. Middle management did accommodate boarders occasionally, but generally only those in their same level of employment. Therefore, a home suitable for a doctor, engineer, or mine captain is also of interest as a venue for boarding.

Lankton (1991: 153) describes a generic C&H captains's ten-room house

plan as rectangular, twenty-five by forty-eight feet on a masonry foundation over a concreted basement.

> The house carried a roofed veranda across the front, and a single-story storage area with a shed roof off the kitchen in the back. The first floor divided into a vestibule, parlor, sitting room, dining room, and kitchen with pantry. The second floor contained five bedrooms and a bath with toilet and tub. Although equipped with plumbing, no central heating or electrical services were indicated. . . . The ceilings were 8'6" in the clear on the first floor, and 8' on the second.

Private homes. Privately-owned homes also accommodated boarders. Designs of these homes ran the full gamut of local vernacular styles, from the Victorian town home of the Fellmans (figure 10) to the modest L-plan of the
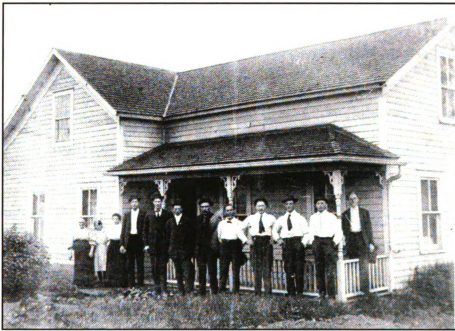
Figure 33. Hanson boardinghouse, Iron River. (Iron County Historical and Museum Society)

Hanson home near Iron River (figure 33). In numerous instances homes were altered structurally to accommodate boarders—another floor or wing was added, or an additional entrance, or the kitchen was enlarged to handle the increased demand. Bathrooms or at least toilets also might be added—if not otherwise, then by expanding the backyard facility to a two- or three-holer.

Family accounts tell of resourceful widows who modified their homes to take in
sufficient boarders to support themselves and their families.

<u>Boardinghouse Facilities</u>

Facilities of the boardinghouses, like the houses themselves, varied wide-
ly. In the first place, amenities differed dramatically relative to time and technol-
ogy, locale, economics, type of boarding-house, company policies, and personal
preferences. An examination of several boardinghouses from the same decade,
or even the same year, would demonstrate their physical differences. Few if any
would be likely to include all the latest from technology or the Sears catalogue: a
boardinghouse in the late 1920s might feature a radio in the parlor contrasted
with an ancient wood-burning stove with massive water reservoir in the kitchen.
Even in the same place and at the same time, boarders would encounter variety
in their accommodations.

Looking at the changes in just the technology of lighting during the peri-
od 1840-1930—from candles, kerosene and gas to electricity—should suggest the
degree of technical variance. Both general technical change and its application to
mining influenced conditions at the boardinghouses on company property.
Within the private sector, community desires were more pronounced than com-
pany priorities.

Earliest mining was carried out by candlelight; eventually each miner's
helmet was equipped with a small carbide lamp. Finally, around the turn of the
century the mines began to be electrified, though not all adopted the new tech-
nology immediately, nor necessarily for lighting. Electric mechanical systems
were employed before general lighting. For example, Quincy lighted its surface
buildings in the 1890s and installed motorized tram cars to bring ore to the sur-
face in 1901, but "never made much use of such lighting underground" (Lankton

and Hyde 1982: 62). Gogebic iron mines adopted electric trams in 1895; underground miners relied on their carbide lamps until about 1930 (Sell 1990).

Lighting in the homes paralleled this uneven evolution. Ironwood incorporated as a city in 1889 and that same year installed electric lights and an electric streetcar system (Sell 1990). Electrification of company properties was not necessarily as progressive. As part of an extensive renovation of its large company boardinghouse at Trimountain in 1906, Trimountain Mining installed electric lighting (Monette 1991: 40). In 1910, Freda, Winona, and King Philip Locations were electrically-lit, while numerous surrounding communities were not. In Iron Mountain, homes had a single electric drop cord for a bulb in each room, and the company controlled the current. Lights came on early enough so residents could dress and make breakfast. At sunrise the current was cut off until dusk, going off again at nine o'clock at night (Dulan 1978: 114).

By 1913 many location dwellings along the Keweenaw had electric lights at discount prices (Guilbault 1994, Monette 1993: 122-23, Committee 1913). With huge generators the mining companies produced their own electricity for the mine and mill operations and had sufficient extra power to light their locations and occasionally surrounding communities as well. Stakel (1994: 67) reports, for instance, that CCI used Edison generators before 1920 to operate electric pumps in the Republic-area mines and "we were also furnishing Republic Township with all the electric energy the township needed."

At Victoria, however, George Hooper's 1918 letters to Evalyn Cook clearly indicate the lack of electric lighting. This was not because the company balked at adopting new technology, but because Victoria enjoyed extraordinarily cheap power from compressed air and steam (Johanson 1993). Mining companies needed strong motivation to make expensive changes. Victoria, therefore, was not the only location at the time, nor its boardinghouse the only such dwelling,

still relying on oil and kerosene. Channing, for example, did without electricity until about 1925 (Stevens 1977: 15).

Prior to electrification, the mines depended on steam power. The boardinghouses—at least the large company houses close to the mine head—and other company facilities reaped the benefit. Both the Copper Range Hospital and its nurses' quarters building, built by Trimountain Mining in 1906, were heated by steam supplied by the company (Monette 1991: 33-4). The Champion company boardinghouse at Freda was heated by steam and had piped-in water (Guilbault 1994). At Victoria the large company boardinghouse had piped-in steam heat and hot water provided by the company (VCM Files, Hooper correspondence). However, heating in the workers' cabins came more conventionally from centrally-located heating stoves and residual heat from the cook stove.

Boardinghouses frequently included special physical components in their design. One interesting architectural feature of the Gabourie house in Princeton (figure 26) is the addition of classical detail (columns and pediments on the porch), no doubt reflective of the concentration of area Italians in Princeton. In some instances the special feature of a boardinghouse was linked to the nationality of the residents and was as important to the boardinghouse as to a private home of someone of the same ethnic identity.

For example, saunas were a common feature of a Finn boardinghouse. Traditionally built of squared logs with dove-tailed corners, saunas stood as one-room outbuildings close to the residence. If they could also be positioned near a lake or stream, so much the better; bathers could then use the body of water for the requisite cooling-off portions of the sauna ritual. Saunas were so prevalent a part of the material culture of the Finns that current cultural geographers use them "as an index to Finnish-American settlement zones" (Lockwood 1987: 308). When individual saunas were not feasible, community versions appeared, such

as the one on Sutherland Street, around the corner from the barbershop and across from the pool room in Monticello (Bednar).

Cellars for wine storage were particularly important to Italian houses and where they were lacking, storage and access arrangements were made close by (Spelgatti 1993).

Location boardinghouse complexes could even include on-site facilities such as a barber shop more conventionally found as a separate component in a town. The I. Stephenson boardinghouse complex at Wells, near Escanaba, resembled a small village under one roof. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for 1929 show the footprint of the building: four large two-story wings set at right angles to one another nearly forming a squared "O." In figure 34 it appears deceptively small. What seems a separate commercial building to the right was actually one of the four wings of the boardinghouse, containing the barbershop, pool room, reading room, and wash room downstairs and separate quarters and dining room for the company office staff above. Space between the barbershop wing
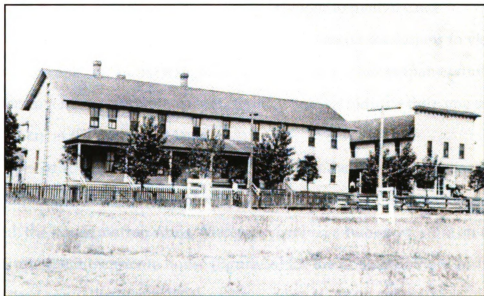
Figure 34. I. Stephenson Company boardinghouse complex, 1902. (Courtesy Delta County Historical Society)
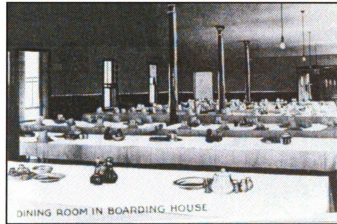
Figure 35. Boardinghouse dining room, possibly the Stephenson. (Courtesy Delta County Historical Society)

and the wing on the left gave access to the large, rectangular inner court that allowed light and fresh air to courtyard-side rooms. Numerous outbuildings completed the complex. This boardinghouse provided the men with not only room and board, but recreation and personal services besides.

Although most towns included at least one hotel to accommodate visiting dignitaries, traveling theatrical performers, peddlers, Eastern businessmen and the like, select travelers were also provided for in designated location boarding-houses. In the correspondence from George Hooper to Evalyn Cook it is quite clear that she would be expected to provide special accommodations to visiting company officials, including a separate table at meals. The company would, however, cover these additional costs. Quincy records indicate the same sort of arrangement at its locations (Mann 1913).

Special accommodations were instituted by other than mining company policy, however. At the Wiesen House in Rockland, where the mine office staff boarded, the house matron Anna Wiesen designated a two-room suite on the first floor of the fifteen-room house (figure 36) for the Roman Catholic bishop who visited annually (Fortin 1994).

The three-story company boardinghouse at Freda run by the Durocher
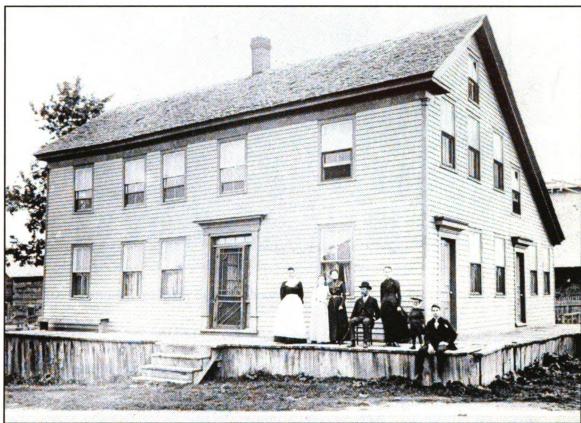
Figure 36. Wiesen boardinghouse in Rockland, c. 1900. (Courtesy Mary Anderson, Mary Jeffs Reagan Museum)

family in the 1920s (figure 37) served two distinct populations of boarders: female teachers and single male millworkers. Although the house had not been designed to separate boarding populations, the Durochers improvised. The first floor plan was comprised of two private bedrooms for the manager, kitchen, dining room, and the smoking/sitting room typical of these facilities. The second and third floors were bedrooms. The teachers were assigned rooms on the second floor, where the children of the family had their quarters as well. One of the second-floor rooms was converted to a sitting room/parlor for the teachers, giving them a congregating space away from the men who used the gathering room on the first floor. The men's bedrooms were all on the third floor. Male boarders used the (left) front entrance; family and boarding teachers used the other (right) on the side. Ground-level doorway gave basement access (Guilbault 1994).
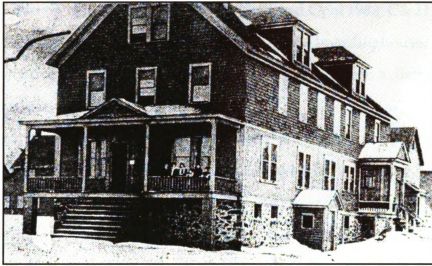
Figure 37. Champion company boardinghouse at Freda. (Courtesy Frieda Guilbault)

Yet another unusual physical design element of miners' boardinghouses was the relative absence of, literally, "bathrooms" (saunas excepted). There were toilet facilities, of course, and they ranged from outside privies of various sizes to modern latrines, depending upon budget and prevailing technology. Nevertheless, specific bathing facilities for the mining boarders were often absent from the large company houses where it might seem they were most needed. However, companies provided bathing facilities separate from the houses.

At or very near to the mine entrance was a change-house or "dry," essentially a locker and wash room for the men. Thus only the house owner or manager and family would require bathing facilities in the house. When home conditions demanded that bath water had to be heated on the stove and carried to a portable tub set up in the kitchen once a week or so, it seems that the company-provided dry was not so much a company kindness as a practical necessity.

Moreover, as already noted, as part of their paternalism programs some companies built bath houses with showers and swimming pools. The C & H community library included a bath house in the basement. These were public facilities, open to the men, women, and children of the community, not just to

families of mining company employees (O'Neill and Opal 1982, C& H Annual Report 1911). Thus the lack of bathing facilities in the boardinghouse, whether company, commercial, or family, would seem not to have been a distinct hardship in those early years.

Boardinghouse wash room facilities were not entirely absent, however. As acknowledged above, the Stephenson house at Wells had a large wash room near the barber shop. The Wiesen house included a large room next to the kitchen equipped with pump, basin, soap, and stacks of towels, and reportedly it was the first destination of the men as they returned from work (Fortin 1994). Furthermore, as hot water from the tap became more readily available in homes generally, shower facilities for boarders (often included in basements) and full bathrooms became increasingly part of house design.

Universal Elements of the Boardinghouse

Despite the variables and variations between specific houses, they each had to fulfill the functions specified in the *OED* definition: A place to sleep, to eat, and to socialize as in a family. Thus, three structural elements of a boardinghouse were universal: bedrooms, a kitchen, and a parlor or front gathering room. Scattered details of these rooms and their furnishings in specific houses come largely from rare photos or reminiscences of the boarders or managers' family members. The spartan re-creation of the cabins at Victoria has been verified for accuracy by past residents.

The Gabourie boardinghouse in Princeton had numerous iron beds arranged close together dormitory-style (visible through the windows, figure 38). A long-time resident recalls 175 double beds at the big Princeton boardinghouse (Dozzi 1982). Besides the small bedroom of the bed-ridden Mr. Wiesen,

the second floor of the Wiesen boardinghouse featured one large dormitory
room with seven or eight single beds, and four other bedrooms with double

Figure 38. Close-up of Gabourie boardinghouse. (Marquette County Historical Society)

beds, bedside lamps, and washstands with bowl and pitcher. Chamber pots
resided under the beds (Fortin 1994).

At the company house at Freda in the 1920s, the resident family had its
own furnishings for the private rooms, but the company supplied furnishings for
the boarders. Their bedrooms contained beds, dressers, rocking chairs, scattered
rugs on hardwood floors, and a shelf with hooks under to hang clothing
(Guilbault 1994).

Reminiscences of the boardinghouse kitchens center on the foods and
activities there rather than the furnishings, though from the description of the
processes carried out it is possible to infer some details of particular kitchens.
Kreidberg 's *Food on the Frontier* (1975) detailing kitchens of Minnesota's Mesabi
Iron Range of the same period as this Michigan study provides a valuable cross-
check of information.

Wood stoves with reservoirs to heat water for dishwashing were fairly typical, even into the 1900s. Hooper's note that the kitchen in the Victoria boardinghouse included hot water "independent of the stoves" was significant: it meant savings of both labor and cost. No one would need to haul cold water to the stove reservoirs nor bail the heated water out, and there was no need to purchase fuel to heat wash water. The two stoves he describes with a total of sixteen lids (comparable to burners today) suggest a Calumet woman's description of her younger years:

> She worked in a boardinghouse where she tended a cookstove, whose huge iron, brass, and copper kettles, filled with beans, potatoes, pork, rice, and cornmeal mush, sat "forever stewing, night and day" on twelve lids, providing food for up to sixty men. (Thurner 1994: 94)

Many homes had root cellars or basements to accommodate food stores— barrels, jars, crates, and cans (though a small cache hole such as under the cabin at Fayette, or a loft sufficed in some instances). Neither cold storage nor water was necessarily provided for, however, in the design of these Michigan kitchens. Ice boxes became available in America in the 1840s, but only three are recorded in the kitchen data of this study (two in the 1920s) and only one mechanical refrigerator (a Kelvinator), during the Depression (Windsor 1980, Mather 1994, Caspary 1994).

Until water was at least available from a hand pump in the house, there were few fixed sinks. Here again, company priorities, local trends, and economics seem to have played a more significant role than date or extant technology in what features developed where. The Victoria log houses built about 1899 (figure 16), for instance, had neither a kitchen sink (wet or dry) nor root cellar nor ice house. In contrast, the plan for the saltbox miner's home (figure 32) includes fixed sink, pump, and trap door to under-house storage. The plan for one of the new company houses at Quincy (figure 40) a decade later, however,

shows a sink in the kitchen and indoor toilets elsewhere in the house, suggesting that this kitchen had piped-in water. Company boardinghouses at Freda and Delta Chemical Location had running water and inside plumbing in the 1920s; other houses in the area, even company location housing, did not (Guilbault 1994, Mather 1994).

Pantries, from closet to room-sized, were also standard features of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century kitchens in all but the most rudimentary designs. Sometimes a work area, and possibly the location of the sink (if there was one), the pantry (or buttery as they were also called) also served for storage of dishes, pots and pans, and food stuffs such as baked goods that would not go to the cellar (Kreidberg 1975). Special furniture such as pie safes augmented storage, and tables provided both work surfaces and eating space. Every kitchen documented in this study through physical examination, floorplans, or verbal description included a pantry, even the Victoria log homes with their tiny under-stairs space.

Less is known with certainty about the furnishings of the parlors, dining rooms, or barrooms of the Michigan mining boardinghouses than about the kitchens. Interior photographs of the boardinghouse seem virtually non-existent, a fact bemoaned by researchers at Lowell, as well (Beaudry and Mrozowski 1987, 1989). Therefore, this interior photo of a Michigan boardinghouse and its residents (figure 39) is significant not only in what it shows, but in the fact that it exists at all.

Although showing just a part of the dining room, figure 39 provides a glimpse of the decorating and furnishings that sought to make a house, a home—or at least those furnishing which a mining company believed appropriate for a working-class home. For the few objects shown, this photo offers the opportunity to consider the meanings and significance behind the physical surroundings of the boarders.

Figure 39. Boarders, resident family, and staff at Painesdale, 1912. (Courtesy Copper Range Development and Houghton County Historical Society)

Lace curtains, the wall clock, pictures on the wall, and the richly-patterned floor covering are all unnecessary to the function of bare shelter, and therefore suggest attempts to make the room not just functional but comfortable, to include elements that one would find in the local family homes. The clock also functioned to regulate the operation of the household, to synchronize the domestic activities with the mine schedule.

One of the wall pictures, in fact the one most prominent in the photo, appears to be a poster of a steamship. Quite possibly it is an advertisement for one of the steamship lines connecting the immigrant miners with family and friends. Without being able to examine it and its physical context, there is no way to analyze fully that poster. Was one of its functions, perhaps, to mask something on the wall? Certainly it functions as decoration, diversion for the

eye. Its full meaning, however, probably included nostalgia, yearning for loved ones long distant, and even motivation to face another day on the job knowing the money earned would soon put those loved ones on that ship or one like it bound for America.

That floor covering that reverses pattern from one side of the room to the other (probably reversible carpeting) and is entirely absent under the dining table (absent by design to make cleaning easier, or cut away after wearing out?) suggests combined practicality and frugality, so necessary in the frontier society with its economic uncertainties. Yet it was also an important middle-class American symbol of the home. One observer of the Copper Country around the turn of the century noted that the furnishings of the miners' homes included three significant items: lace curtains, pianos (or organs), and carpets, "often [of] Brussels or other costly fabrics" (Monette 1992: 9). In the mining regions, the prosperity of a household was often judged by its floorcoverings (*Scrapbook memories* 1994: 248).

Lace curtains were definitely class markers, particularly significant because they could be seen by anyone in a community including those who would never have the occasion to see (or be impressed by) the floorcovering. Thus Katherine Grier's (1988) model of the household as a stage, with publicly viewed areas and private "backstage" regions, extends beyond the front door and windows to the street.

Thurner (1994: 152) tells of the wife of an English mining captain who was shunned by her neighbors because her lace curtains were considered a sign of uppityness, clear justification for their snobbishness toward her. Apparently local attitudes were a bit much to bear for the woman, who returned to England for some months to visit family. On her return, she discovered versions of her despised lace curtains in many of her neighbors' windows.

Without more specifics, the full import of the incident cannot be determined, but it suggests the significance attached to material culture displayed by some and not by all. If the other women were also English, it seems economic differentiation could be the key meaning behind the curtains. If they were wives of Italian or Irish trammers, perhaps, or others of definitely lower social as well as occupational rank, then lace curtains could be understood as a symbol of social rank and therefore a focus of resentment toward "Cousin Jacks" so often showed preferential treatment over the general laborers by the mining companies.

Other details of furnishings in the photo such as the oil lamps on the mantle and cupboard (upper right) and the bare-bulb electrical ceiling fixture (upper left) demonstrate the level of technology employed and offer a small point of comparison to other and earlier boardinghouse furnishings. At the Central Mine boardinghouse built in 1861, light was provided in the men's sitting room by "two bracket kerosene lamps, with glaring reflectors" (Monette 1995a: 8).

Many who remember the dining rooms or parlors of boardinghouses, whether company houses or private homes, mention pianos or organs. Both were popular instruments during the Victorian era, becoming both a focus of sociability and a measure of middle-class status. Additionally, parlor organs figured among the wide variety of religious furnishings popularized by the Christian domestic ideal of the nineteenth century: moral surroundings would shape the residents' character accordingly (Cott 1977, Halttunen 1989).

Another memory is of the isinglass window of the big parlor stove in grandma Wiesen's boardinghouse, and how the fire glowed hot and red through it (Fortin 1994). A variety of stoves produced heat in the boarding-houses where steam was not provided by mine or mill. In some cases, memories of stoves also call up the logistics of dodging a sibling's elbow or knee while scrambling

into clothes near the warmth, or of "toasting one's bottom" if too close (Dulan 1978: 178).

Cold rooms in un-insulated boardinghouses were also memorable for some. In one account, the lathing strips of the walls were clearly outlined by stripes of frost on the plaster during frigid winters (*Scrapbook memories* 1994: 11). Around the turn of the century a surveyor found shelter near Princeton, but complained: "I stayed in the old boardinghouse at the mine and I thought I would freeze. I had on all of my clothes, but I was in the third story with no fire" (Young: 30).

Knuth (1993) recalls the decorative backbar in the barroom of the Bay View. Several informants mention card tables and chairs in their parlor area, often triggering discussions of social events. Benches, rocking chairs, and purloined kitchen chairs also furnished the boarders' sitting/smoking rooms.

Much else becomes speculation. Looking at the raw newness of the Bonnie Location boardinghouse (figure 22) or its later state of abandonment and decay (figure 57), it is difficult to imagine it featuring a heavily-draped and over-stuffed Victorian parlor with an organ, horsehair settees, and fringed table scarves, though it may indeed have acquired them. Some of the private board-inghouses in the region undoubtedly had parlors with the French- or Turkish-inspired designs popular between the 1850s and the 1930s (Grier 1988).

An alternative furnishing style possibly used by the companies would have been far more utilitarian than the overstuffed sofas, and more ideologically in keeping with company priorities by 1900. Arts and crafts designs, also known as mission style—plain, straight, stained oak pieces without upholstery or elaborate ornamentation—grew in popularity after the turn of the century. Inexpensive and durable, mission style pieces had ideological attraction as well. One producer declared their message: "not only wholesome, but [it revives] the

accomplishment of the colonial craftsman, 'an educated and thinking being' who loved his work without demanding a wage or labor union membership" (Cohen 1982: 294).

The paternalistic package of social welfare promoted by the mining companies after the 1890s included attention to cleanliness and home design. According to Cohen (1982), this is one example of how American middle-class standards were also being promoted by direct industrial intervention across the country, through classes and home visits from reformers recommending iron beds with mattresses, painted not papered walls, built-in storage or shelves, and other easy-to-clean furnishings such as mission-style pieces.

From existing data, the company houses and some of the private ones incorporated these simple furnishing styles, but whether in a conscious effort to promote the new middle-class standards to working-class individuals, or simply because the products were utilitarian, is difficult to discern. One middle-class value that mining companies clearly sought to communicate through worker housing was privacy for the resident family.

Interpreting Interior Space—Public, Private and Semi-private

Another approach to boardinghouse interiors is an examination of the spatial arrangement, the issue of public versus private space and what constitutes each. Concomitant is the need to define who is entitled or limited to these specific spaces. As Halttunen (1989), Hall (1969), Altman and Chemers (1980) and others have established, an important element in the role of householder is control of the domestic space and various people's access to it. Rapoport (1969: 80), for example, refers to the "sanctity of the threshold," noting that "devices for defining threshold vary" and may occur at different locations within the total domestic space.

In a boardinghouse where strangers were brought together to carry out the normal rhythms of domestic life, numerous reasons for controlling access to space became particularly crucial. Sometimes access would be dictated by custom or even law, such as the ability of the landlady to maintain sexual privacy. Controlling access could relate to practicality, such as keeping the kitchen, the hub of a household that fed dozens or even hundreds of people on three or four demanding schedules per day, free of excess traffic. Safety of the residents could depend upon being able to exclude certain individuals, and certainly the economics of the boardinghouse would limit access to services to those who had paid for them.

Status of the manager's family or other boarders might entitle them to special spaces. The relative weight of practicality versus notions of individual dignity—and company policy where applicable—could influence how (and if) the boarders' accommodations were subdivided. To some degree, then, the physical layout of a boardinghouse should suggest something of the relationships between the residents, staff, and others, and the values of the community.

Figure 40. One of three new Quincy boardinghouses, 1917. (Courtesy Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, and Nils Eilertsen. HAER Mi-2-251)
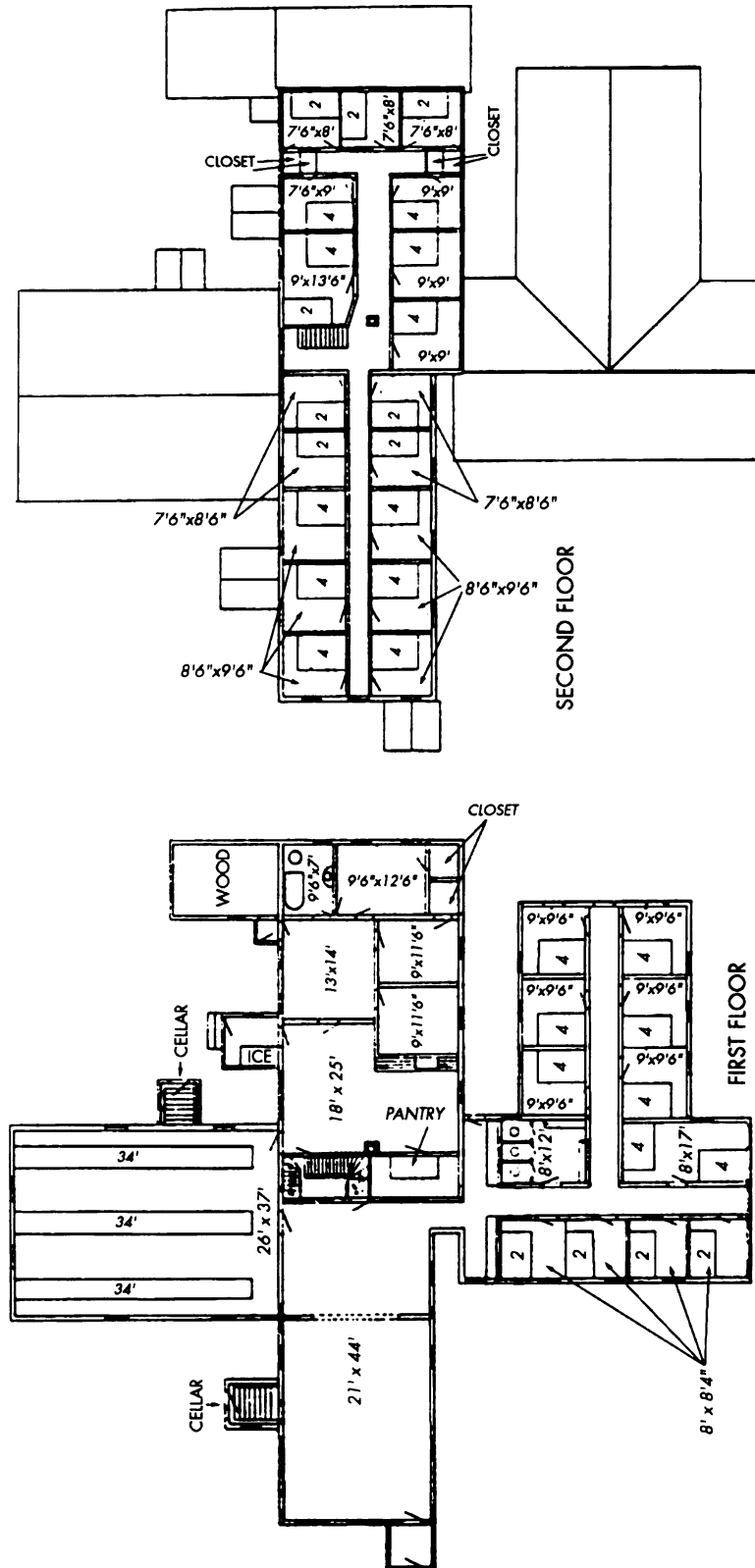
Figure 41. Adapted from Floorplan of Franklin Boardinghouse, 1917. (HAER Mi-2-250)

Architectural Divisions in Company and Commercial Houses

In 1917-18 the Quincy Mining Company built the boardinghouse in Figures 40 and 41 as part of its "last residential building boom" discussed above. Maps and company records suggest it was created by remodeling the old school at Franklin Mine. Though its extra wings provide additional bedrooms, the main part of the house includes all the basic components to be found in the simpler designs such as at Bonnie or Ewen locations.

Its floorplan clearly shows a vestibule entry into a large (924 square feet) front room or parlor. Control of the entire house would fall to the house manager and therefore the manager's personal domain should be the most "private" (though since this is a company house the company would have ultimate control of the property). This entry space is certainly the most public.

Since it is a residence, law and custom would act to restrain indiscriminate public access which the house manager would be expected to reinforce. However, a certain amount of off-the-street public traffic would occur as new "customers" (potential boarders) would come in to arrange for accommodation. On special occasions other members of the public, as invited guests, might also have access to this large room. Largely, though, it would be the gathering area for the boarders on off-hours, facilitating the card games, storytelling, and other leisure activities reported to have occupied them.

Interaction between boarders and manager in this area would probably be minimal and initiated by the manager. Thus the street entrance of the boardinghouse leads to a semi-public space, the nature of which falls somewhere between the living room of a private home (Altman and Chemers 1980) and the front area of a commercial shop.

The dining room includes three, thirty-four-foot long plank tables with

enough floor space to allow for foot traffic and chairs or benches. If the diners were allowed only two feet of table space per person, this dining room could accommodate 102 diners at each seating; at three feet, sixty-eight diners. Two doors connect the dining room with the rest of the house. One leads to the front room/parlor; the other to the kitchen. The door between parlor and dining room serves to further control access to this area, suggesting it as a domain for the boarders and/or the resident family. In "shot gun" type houses where one room lies directly behind another such as at the Bonnie, the dining room sits between the front room and the kitchen. Thus the pattern of access would be the same.

In the dining room, boarders, manager, and house staff come together. Staff, necessary to an operation this size, represent yet another component of "public" or "private" within the domain of the house. They could be members of the "private" contingent: daughters or other resident members of the house-holder's family. If hired from the local community or resident boarders them-selves, their status would be more ambiguous. The dining room, then, also rep-resents a certain ambiguity: with limited access but from two directions, it sug-gests an area more restricted and thus more private than the parlor, yet another area where boarders and other outsiders as well as manager would meet.

The first floor bedroom wing and the upstairs shift the notion of private space more toward the boarders; cleaning staff and manager retain access, but presumably not arbitrarily. Boarder privacy is also not complete as these are all shared rooms (even the latrine with three stools), yet they are cells of relative pri-vacy with limited access through single doors off hallways that are themselves separated from the more public congregating rooms.

Exactly how many boarders could be sharing any particular room is sug-gested by the bed designations. For instance, the six 9' x 9'-6" bedrooms in the

first floor wing all show double bunks, potentially sleeping four men per room. However, if the men worked double shifts, up to eight men could claim one of these rooms. While four slept, the other four would be at work. This house, nominally designed for one hundred men, could accommodate twice as many through double shifting.

That it accommodated that many is highly doubtful. Company records indicate four houses at this time were created to house a total of two hundred men, fifty of whom were in a structure put up in 1916. Obviously the company did not intend the men to double-shift. Moreover, considering the company's concern that trouble would arise from having too many men congregated in one dwelling, and since numerous boardinghouses used double beds but assigned only one man to each, it seems more likely that this house accommodated closer to fifty men.

Only four of the rooms on the second floor, all at the back, had closets. Otherwise there is little space for personal belongings; probably boarders had few things, both of economic necessity and for practicality. Under that assumption, the closets appear anomalous. Introducing considerations of status and gender, however, render them more logical.

High ranking mining company officials and investors occasionally visited the locations and were given preferential accommodation in the company boardinghouses. These rooms, at the back and upstairs, might have been the quietest and therefore considered the best location in the house. The closets would be included in these rooms to heighten their preferred status—and that of the occupants. Correspondence between Charles Lawton and W. R. Todd in 1917 specifically refers to closets in house designs, linking them to "'a little better class of dwelling'"and the "'satisfaction of our Cornish mining captains'" (McNear 1987: 531).

A second possibility is that they were available for live-in staff. Boardinghouse staff was almost exclusively female. The closets might have been a concession to femininity in a house designed primarily for men. The problem with this explanation is that it places female servants' rooms in close proximity to the men's rooms, not an attractive situation for community or company standards. There is, nevertheless, a strong suggestion that the closets relate to status.

Two types of areas remain, the operating facilities and the manager's quarters. Placement and access to the woodshed, ice room, and cellar make them available to anyone—family, staff, tradesmen, or boarders who helped with chores. Helpers could bring in wood or carry down the root vegetables without intruding into the busy kitchen or infringing on the manager's private domain.

The back center of the first floor is obviously the manager's quarters. They are set off by the stairwell and pantry, which combine as an effective noise buffer and physical barrier to penetration of the quarters from the street or the boarders' areas. The only ways in are through the parlor/dining room door and then the dining room/kitchen door, or through the vestibule entrance between the wood shed and the ice room. Even then the door is protected from the casual passerby, being set into an unobtrusive corner. Clearly the physical dimension determines and reinforces a definite division between this area, the private or most restricted area of the house, and the rest.

The back vestibule opens into a thirteen-foot by fourteen-foot room that possibly functioned as a parlor or sitting room. Through the door to the left is the large kitchen, of necessity both a part of the facilities plant for the commercial establishment and the food center for the manager's family. In fact, the sitting room is probably necessitated by the double role of the kitchen, since in its commercial capacity it would not function well as family gathering spot. Still further protected from intrusion are three bedrooms (two with small closets) and a separate full bathroom.

The private quarters comprise more than 960 square feet, or slightly less than 20 percent of the total area of the house. Assuming a family of five for the manager, that is roughly two hundred square feet per capita of designated living space, or approximately five times the proportion of living area per boarder, based on residency of one hundred boarders.

These proportions varied considerably house to house and over time as boarding populations rose and fell. Still, this example shows an architecturally defined hierarchy of private space (HPS) relative to manager, boarders, and public that begins with a semi-public parlor and moves to a semi-private dining room and access to the boarders' rooms. A kitchen and other plant facilities interpose between these areas and the separate and personal domain of the manager.

Another example of this separate domain was in the Victoria boardinghouse. Says Hooper of the manager's apartment, "the private part of the house has five rooms and a *private parlor*" [italics mine] (VCM Files, Hooper correspondence). Without floorplans of this building it is not possible to demonstrate that it conformed to the HPS, but clearly there was architectural separation between manager and boarders.

A description of the Champion boardinghouse at Freda definitely demonstrates the HPS. The front entry for the male boarders brought them into their congregating area. A stairway from the front room led to the third floor men's quarters. Behind that was the dining room, and then the kitchen.

The side entrance (figure 37) for the family was also used by the teachers. This opened to a small hallway that connected to the kitchen and the private manager's rooms beyond, and to stairs that went to the second floor and the additional family quarters (plus the rooms assigned to the teachers) (Guilbault 1994).

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR
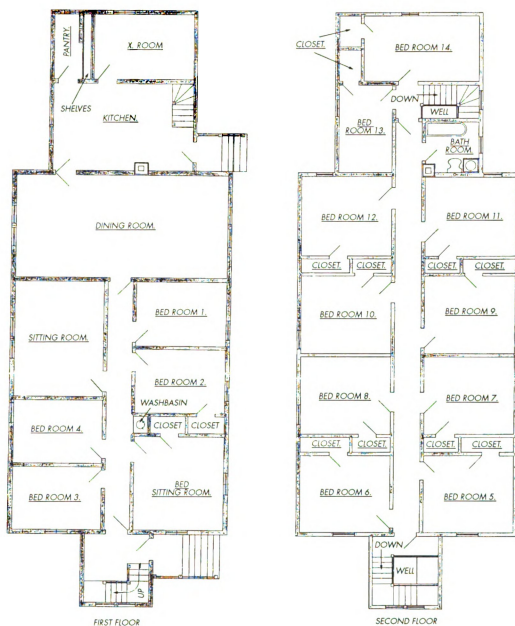
Calumet & Hecla Mining Co.
House No 31

Figure 42. Adapted from C&H Mining House Plan No. 31. (Courtesy Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections)

C&H Mining Company house plan No. 31 (1899) (figure 42) has exterior configuration similar to the Freda house (figure 37) except that it is two stories rather than three. The HPS is clearly established by the two separate entries: just as at Freda, the entry on the narrow end of the building is for boarders. In the case of House No. 31, the entrance opens to a stairwell to the second floor as well as to the central hall of the first floor. This hall is flanked by bedrooms and two sitting rooms and leads directly to the dining room, which runs the full width of the house. Behind the dining room are the utility areas (kitchen, pantry, etc.)

The second, side entrance opens into the kitchen with direct access to a set of back stairs to the second floor. These stairs lead to the manager's domain, two large bedrooms with closets and a full bath. Beyond, flanking a central hallway, are eight additional bedrooms with closets. The only toilet and bath facilities in the house are within the realm of the manager, although there is a wash basin in the downstairs hall. As in the houses at Franklin Mine and Freda, this house also features a second, individual entrance obviously designed to "reinforce nuclear family privacy" (Cohen 1982: 296).

Several features of the plan stand out immediately. First, the separate entrances define the two domains of the dwelling before one even enters. Also, the manager's quarters are about five feet narrower on each side than the rest of the house, further defining it visually.

On the interior, specific regions of the house denoted for each population, boarders and manager family, are spatially defined, but done so in different ways on each floor. Upstairs, the bedrooms and bath for the manager and the back stairs occupy the narrow back extension. The central hallway connects to this area and there is no architectural cue marking the division. However, the bathroom door lies just past the division and would be an unmistakable sign of when one had gone "too far" down the hall into the manager's territory.

As in the other examples, the first floor division is the dining room, and again it is an ambiguous space neither public nor private where all members of the household, plus occasional outsiders would meet and interact.

This architectural separation of boarders from manager conformed to the specified standards for industrial housing—both in company and private homes—that appeared during the World War I period as part of the general social reform movement (Knowles 1920).

But what was formalized in the early twentieth century had been in practice long before on the Michigan frontier. As noted above, the I-plan common in the nineteenth century and typified by the Bonnie Location boardinghouse was laid out much like the main wing at Franklin, except that the dining room lay directly between parlor and kitchen.
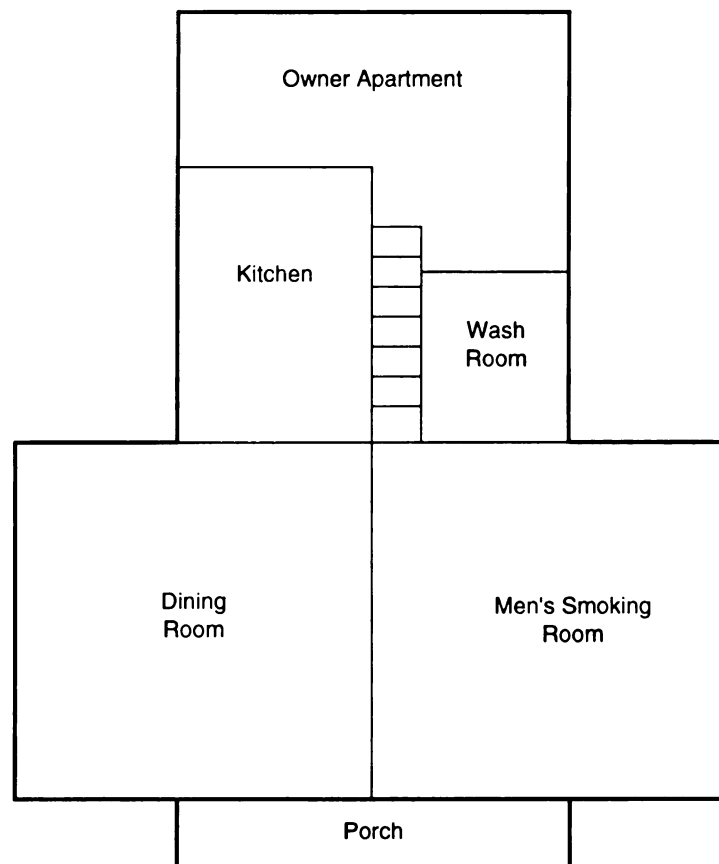
Figure 43. Schematic of Barnum House first floor, c. 1918. (By author)

Other variations of company house plans existed as well. The Barnum House, also built before the turn of the century, included both private apartment for the manager and the HPS. Entry to this inverted T-form (figure 43) opened from the large porch into the huge parlor/smoking room comprising the right half of the T cross-bar. To the left, comprising the other half of the cross-bar was the dining room. The center of the first floor contained the kitchen (behind the dining room), stairs to the upper floor of bedrooms, and a facilities area including a washroom for the boarders off the parlor. At the back of the first floor (base of the T) were the manager's quarters.

Nor was this arrangement limited to company boardinghouses. The Cordes family's modifications to the Bay View in Menominee, for example, illustrate the same general patterns in their "telescope house" (figure 30). The first level separates and orders parlor, dining room, and kitchen/facilities as in the other houses. Family quarters were constructed in the middle extension over the dining room, with private access. Each component of the house further defines the space: the three-story front unit for the boarder; two-story middle unit divided vertically for family above, boarders and staff below; and the single-story kitchen, family and staff area, in the rear.

In yet another example, Anna Wiesen and her granddaughter shared a private apartment at the Wiesen boardinghouse in Rockland where the bishop's reserved suite embellished the HPS one more level.

Architectural Separation in Private Homes

It is more difficult to address the issue of architectural divisions for privacy in a single-family home that also happened to accommodate boarders. Usually sources contain only vague references to additions or modifications made to houses when boarders were introduced or the number of them

expanded, but just exactly what these constructions amounted to is generally left unclear. In her reminiscences of their pioneer days in Marquette, Mrs. Philo Everett recalled that in 1850 Olive Harlow strung sheets up between beds on the second floor of her home to afford a bit of privacy to her boarders, some of whom sought medical care as well as housing. Peryam (1966) reports the same spacial divisions in Amasa. Only additional dishes, nothing structural, was the critical acquisition in another account (Knoblock 1951).

In the case of more permanent house modifications, additional bedrooms and expanded kitchen or dining space is the most tempting speculation. On the occasion of taking in boarders, one family in Hermansville make several house alterations. The small single room upstairs was divided into separate rooms for the boys and girls of the family. Another large room was added that held two double beds, space for the four boarders. Downstairs expansion included a large dining room (Dani 1982). Renters of company housing would have even less opportunity to make such architectural/ spatial alterations, but nevertheless might need to rearrange or reassign interior space to accommodate boarders.

Whenever possible, private space for the resident family was designated vertically, i.e., residents on one floor, boarders on another as in the Bay View. At the Victoria workers' homes that would probably work fairly well as far as sleeping space. Obviously there would be no private parlor space for the family away from the congregating area at the front of the house that served as front room and dining space. In this circumstance where architecture does not define separation, household custom would have to if it were desired. (That issue is discussed in the next chapter.) Where some division did occur, such as between a formal dining room and a parlor, residents might gather in one, boarders in the other, again designated by house rules.

By the World War I era the issue of separation between resident family
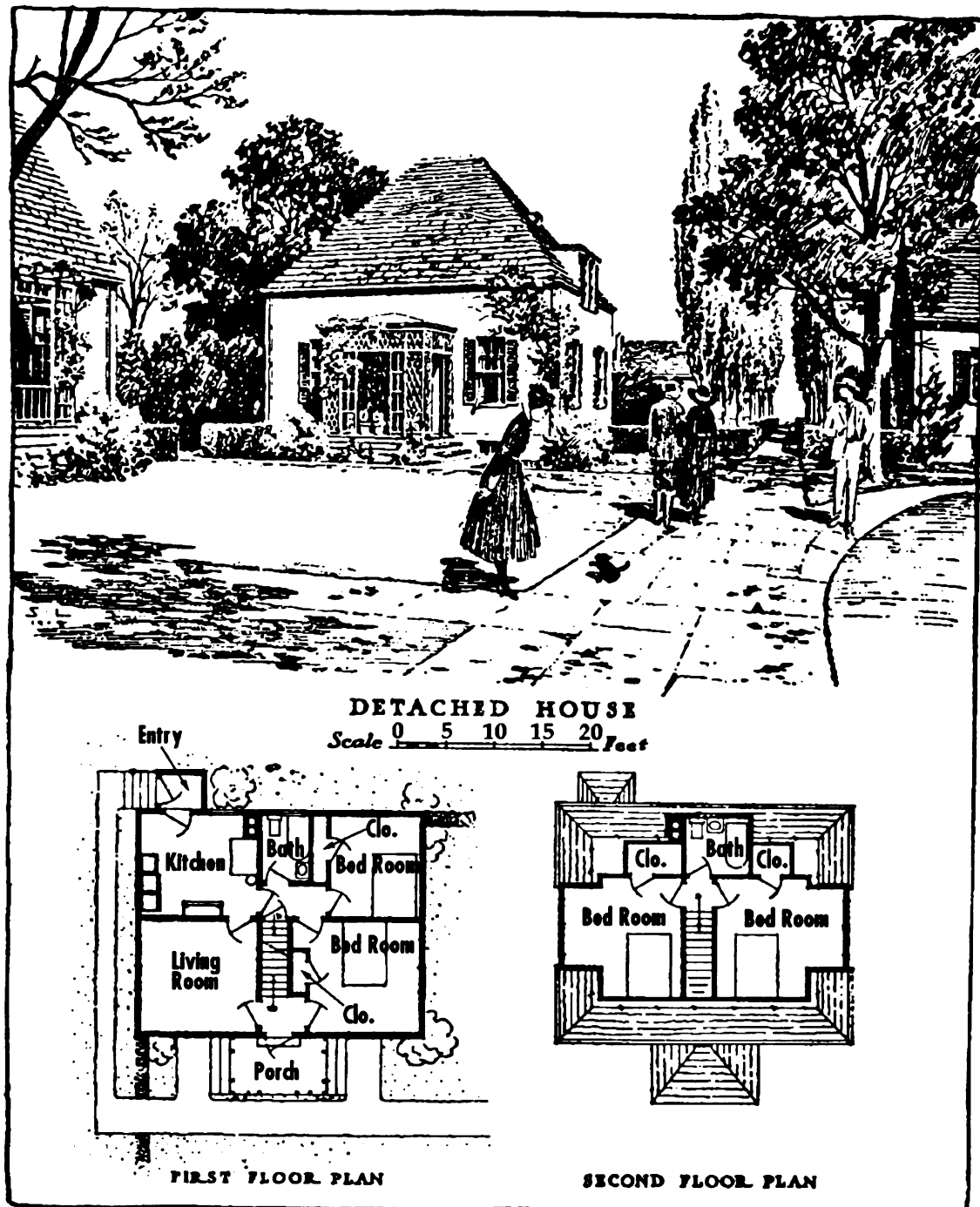
Figure 44. Post-war design for an urban family boardinghouse. (Adapted from Knowles 1920: 328, figure 51).

and boarders in single-family company housing had been addressed by the federal government and formal designs produced. One urban plan, produced for the Emergency Fleet Corporation and built in Wyandotte, Michigan, is a small four-bedroom cottage with hip roof and two side dormers (figure 44). First floor

is a basic four-square arrangement, two bedrooms to the right, living room and kitchen to the left. A small bathroom is tucked behind the central stairway.

Upstairs are two small bedrooms specified for boarders and a bath for them. Except for the division of kitchen from living room and the modern touches of indoor plumbing and closets in every bedroom, the plan is quite similar to the Victoria workers' homes (figure 18). Evidently in both plans the upper story is the architectural response to questions of privacy.

Behavioral responses to these architectural/spatial configurations and to their absence in a one-room cabin inhabited by several people demand attention, clearly. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to examine the physical board-inghouse in regard to one more issue, i.e. status, and then to see the boarding-house in its larger physical/geographical and social context as a feature of the cultural landscape.

Boardinghouses as Signal and Venue of Status

One informant cautioned that getting personal information about board-inghouse life would be difficult since so many people were reticent about admit-ting to having lived in one. Fortunately for the project at hand, her prediction proved false. Although some residual negative connotations about boarding-houses and boarding remain in urban areas, a result of the social reform move-ments of post-World War I (*see* Langlois 1987 for a fascinating example), there seemed to be no such feeling throughout the Michigan mining region. During the "boardinghouse era" on Michigan's mining frontier, there was no apparent stigma attached to living in a boardinghouse either as boarder or part of a resi-dent family, largely because so much of the population was involved, and often in both roles at different periods of their lives.

On the other hand, the mining organizations and the communities they
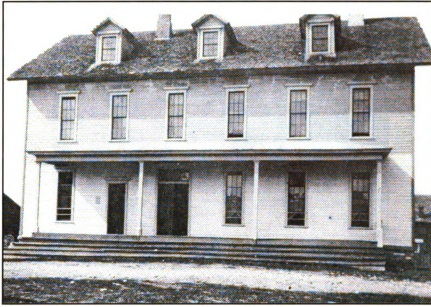
Figure 45. Fayette Hotel. (Courtesy Michigan Historical Museum)

established exhibit a high level of status consciousness. As Virginia City, Nevada, and other Western examples also show (Hardesty 1988: 14), mining companies projected their ideas of social stratification into the architecture of the communities they built. Boarding facilities represent a significant facet of that status designation and reinforcement.

A particularly clear case is Fayette, on the Garden Peninsula in Delta County. Fayette was a company town, population of about five hundred, established by the Jackson Iron Mining Company in 1867 as a smelting site with access to shipping in the lower Great Lakes from its protected "snail shell" harbor on Lake Michigan. Altogether, there were three types of boarding accommodation at Fayette: a dormitory within the hotel, a company boardinghouse, and single-family residences.

The hotel was built in 1867, expanded and remodeled in 1881. As one of the first buildings on the site, the hotel (figure 45) included the original boarding accommodation and continued to serve this function for many years. During the
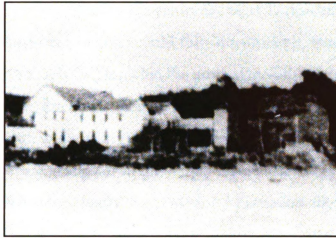
Figure 46. Fayette Hotel with two-story privy and enclosed access. (Courtesy Michigan Historical Museum)

renovation, a two-story privy was built out back with covered walkways leading to it from the guest floors (figure 46). At the same time, the original board and batten siding over wooden frame construction on a brick foundation was covered with clapboards to match the new north and east wings. Internal improvements included a rudimentary heating system and indoor plumbing for —literally—a "bath room," centrally located and equipped with a single tub, and possibly for the kitchen.

The men who worked in the smelting furnace lived in the single, open dormitory room that was the hotel's third floor, while standard hotel clientele occupied the twenty more comfortably appointed bedrooms in the lower two floors (National Heritage Corp. 1974).

The company boardinghouse, already mentioned briefly above (figure 24), measured about eighteen by twenty-one feet in the two-story center section and had wings about fourteen by fourteen feet (approximately 1150 square feet). It included a partial cellar presumably for food storage under the middle section of the house. This structure, built in the period 1870-1875, provided housing for unmarried supervisory personnel (National Heritage Corp. 1974). Because the

structure burned several decades ago before the State Parks Commission (which now controls the historic townsite) could fully document it, interior details of the house were lost. Probably it resembled the pattern already demonstrated, i.e., front gathering room, kitchen in rear, dining room in one wing, manager's quarters in the other, with upstairs divided into boarders' rooms (possibly shared).

There were two groups of single-family residences at Fayette. Boarders stayed in both. One is the cluster of crude cabins discussed above (figure 19).
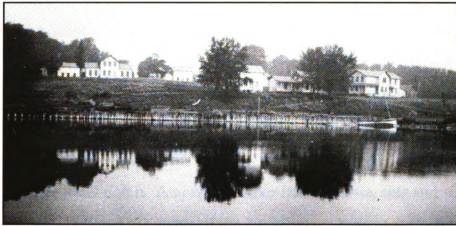
Figure 47. Housing for the "better class" at Fayette. (Courtesy Michigan Historical Museum)

The other, according to a town resident, "was a line of smallish brown framed-houses, for the better class of employees [italics mine]" (Langille 1870: 35). Figure 47, an early photo taken from the harbor at Fayette, shows this residential section of the community. Arranged along an arm of land that encloses the harbor, the line of homes was farthest from the dirt and noise of the smelter. Many of the houses still stand. Largest is the superintendent's home, (far right) a two-story of about twenty-five hundred square feet with a wrap-around veranda. As it was situated, the house overlooked the entire town and was itself a prominent feature of the landscape. The boardinghouse is second structure from the left. Other homes are smaller but most were also two-story (saltboxes or T-plan) with room for numerous bedrooms.

Multiple forms of boarder accommodation do not in themselves establish a link between type of accommodation and boarder status. However, since the community was built to very pointedly link status of primary residents to the details of their home, this same architectural hierarchy reasonably applied to the boarders. House size and building material are obvious indicators of status between the residences, especially since there can be no argument that crude cabins were necessary due to an absence of milled lumber, or that log homes must necessarily have been crudely built.

Other housing details further delineated the differences between grades of employees. A hierarchy of privies ranged from the private, plastered, and wallpapered convenience of the superintendent to rough-built single or double models shared by two or more households.

Porches were another status symbol. The superintendent's veranda out-classed even the hotel porch. Among the other frame homes, size and complexity of the porches denoted the status of the householder, a mere stoop representing the lowest status level. Photos of the boardinghouse show no porch at all (only a large flat stone rests outside the back doorway), while the log "huts were built on the very edge of the street'" (Langille 1870). Residents were meant to clearly understand the ranking in their village and the relation to the architectural features. Just as in the military, housing reflected rank.

Fayette is rare in providing this clear case-study in the relation between housing design and community status because circumstance rendered it a virtual "time capsule" of the 1870s and 80s. The smelter was shut down in 1891 and the town largely abandoned. The subsequent acquisition by the State of Michigan has provided continuing research, documentation, and restoration of the town-site.

Other mining locations and towns have not fared as well. Great numbers

were abandoned or the homes relocated so that entire locations have virtually disappeared; others have undergone such drastic physical change that original status differentiation is not nearly so noticeable.

The James Mine Historic District is, like Fayette, a rare exception. The Iron County Historical Society has documented this mine site and two residential neighborhoods in Mineral Hills. Twelve of the houses, small frame dwellings which "follow the same simple building pattern" were built in 1908 as the West James Location. Four years later, seven more elaborate homes were constructed as the East James Location. Local historian Marcia Bernhardt (1985: 55) notes:

> The houses in the two James Locations are of different architectural designs, which reflect the positions of their intended occupants in the hierarchy of the mining company. . . . The seven frame houses in the East James Location, built for mining officials such as the shift boss, the pay master and the chief mechanic, display a variety of patterns which are more elaborate to distinguish them from the miners' residences in West James Location. These patterns range from the cross-gable-roofed super-intendent's house to several structures with Dutch gambrel roofs.

A further measure of separation between these classes of houses and their occupants should be noted in the designations of West James and East James. The mine itself became the physical separator. Clearly company policies maintaining a stratified work force and reinforcing it through architecture were not unique to Fayette or to its period.

In fact, the differentiation evident at Fayette and throughout the mining district in the decades after the Civil War had become a national presumption by World War I. Federal guidelines for industrial housing established a hierarchy of building types based on their inhabitants. According to Knowles (1920), male employees were divided into six grades: high, medium, and low wage native men; and high, medium, and low wage foreign men. The groups were then sub-divided, married versus single, producing twelve categories.

Company housing was designated on a scale A to F, with A-level accommodations the best, F-level the worst (or most spartan). Grades A through C were applied to single-family homes. The majority of married men would be low-wage category and found in C-level homes.

The greatest number of boarders in single-family homes would be boarding with them. Grades D through F were assigned to company boardinghouses. Here, again, the greatest number of boarders would be in the lowest earning level and therefore in the F-level accommodations. Since foreign men tended to earn less than native workers and to have more need to board, the resulting stratification was both economic and ethnic.

Differences between the grades of housing were determined primarily by degree, i.e., features common to all grades in a category (single-family home or boardinghouse) were bigger, better, or more prevalent in the better grades. Bedroom closets, for instance, became a status indicator in the early twentieth century in the same way that a porch or private privy signalled higher status at Fayette. Closets were specified for grades A through E, but for grade F boardinghouses they were specifically deemed unnecessary. This, then, is the basis for the suggestion above that the upstairs bedrooms with closets at the Franklin boardinghouse may have been reserved for high-level company personnel. It also perhaps explains the significance of Frieda Guilbault's (1994) comment about the company boardinghouse at Freda. Despite its having running water, steam heat, and electricity, she remarked: "I can't remember ever seeing a closet in that house."

The argument that the rooms with closets may have been for serving girls living and working at the boardinghouse also finds some support in Knowles (1920). Guidelines for boardinghouses for single females parallel those for men in most respects. Exceptions include modifications to bathrooms and the

inclusion of special rooms including reception parlor, a sewing room, and a trunk room. The last is specified under the assumption that "minimum sized bedrooms will not accommodate all the belongings [of a female boarder]," no matter her economic class. Perhaps the closets at Franklin, as opposed to nails on the wall for the other boarders, are physical evidence of the same assumption.

None of this speculation, of course, argues that Quincy or any of the other mining companies built to these formal and idealized government guidelines. Rather more likely the guidelines formally established by the time of World War I reflected the generally-held notions of what laborers' boardinghouses should provide, based on decades of ad hoc experience in mill towns and mining locations, Massachusetts to California. That they also reflected and reinforced notions of status is unquestionable.

Status of the Boarders

Boarders and boardinghouses became ubiquitous elements in the mining settlements. Differentiation between workers by ethnicity or occupation was common and both housing type and locality tended to reinforce those differences. Boardinghouses were designated by their location name, e.g. the Barnum House at the Barnum Mine Location; by the name of the current manager, e.g. the Wiesen boardinghouse in Rockland; by a commercial name, such as the Bay View; and frequently by the ethnicity of its occupants, as "The Italian Boardinghouse" (figure 6) or the "Finn Boardinghouse" in a community.

This identification of ethnicity with a particular boardinghouse facilitated newcomers who preferred living with others of their language and background, but also set up whole households for the pranks and worse periodically launched from rival ethnic groups.

Occupation, social status, and architecture entwined and became self-reinforcing of a ranked society of householders, and so too for boarders. Just

as certain architectural features were justified for residents of a specific class as defined by the man's occupational category and inappropriate for others, boarders of a certain rank were properly housed only with others of their same rank.

> At the Adventure Mine in 1859, Thomas W. Buzzo reassured his superior in the East that he did not allow miners to board with him; for it was "a wrong policy to mingle too freely with laborers, . . . as it destroys in a great measure the respect they should bear to their employer and the command the employer should have over them." (Thurner 1994: 153)

Thus a further designation of a boardinghouse, particularly company houses, recognized the occupational rank of its inhabitants, laborers versus higher personnel such as engineers. The small boardinghouse at Spies Location in figure 20 above accommodated managerial staff; the large house in figure 55 below housed laborers.

Additional Uses of the Boardinghouse Physical Plant

It was noted above that some large boardinghouses were the result of building reuse, that their structures had originally been large public facilities such as schools or hospitals. Additional discussion of boardinghouse reuse occurs in the Epilogue. An allied consideration, however, is the multiple community uses of functioning boardinghouses.

Company boardinghouses and some commercial boarding establishments were often among the largest structures in a location or town. Large buildings such as the mine industrial plant, churches, barns, and supervisory personnel's large homes were either unsuited or otherwise unavailable for certain community uses and therefore alternative meeting places had to be found.

The lack of community gathering facilities was particularly acute in the early stages of location development, but even in the later town settlements residents felt the need for community gathering space and looked to the boardinghouses.

A number of factors would have made it a popular choice: 1) sections of the boardinghouse were already considered semi-public domain, 2) many community members might have lived there at one time, so it represented ties of familiarity, 3) parlors or dining rooms were likely to include a piano or organ, 4) there might be a barroom, and the kitchen was equipped to feed a large group, and 5) besides floor space, there were likely many chairs and/or benches available.

Thus, the large rooms such as the parlors and dining halls of some of the boardinghouses lent themselves to special community use. Rooms in boardinghouses doubled from time to time as schools, infirmaries, and public meeting halls, and accommodated church services, children's Christmas plays, dances, and weddings. A physician's wife described one boisterous wedding held only twenty-four hours after the couple met at a ball (Crowell 1976: 17-20). Boardinghouses also housed political meetings. For example, Teal Lake Township was formally organized and its officers elected at the Jackson Iron Company boardinghouse in March, 1858 (Negaunee Centennial Committee 1965). In the locations where saloons were prohibited, boardinghouses became men's gathering halls for talk and cardplaying and occasional surreptitious boozing.

Social Meaning of the Boardinghouse

The physical boardinghouses served numerous utilitarian purposes, primarily feeding and housing a labor force and secondarily providing a community venue for certain social and political occasions. Boardinghouses represent a significant factor in paternalism: mining companies manipulated labor forces most directly through housing. The economics of boardinghouses reveal the financial importance of women's labor on a frontier usually portrayed as almost exclusively male.

Internal divisions of boardinghouse space and the facilities found there relative to those generally available suggest, in part, the ideological bases of boardinghouse design.

No study of boardinghouses would be complete, however, without a consideration of what life was actually like in them. Behavior must be examined against the company policies and the built environment in an attempt to determine whether these were merely and literally boardinghouses, or to what degree and in what ways they were homes as well. That is the consideration of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

THE BOARDINGHOUSE AS HOME AND HOUSEHOLD

The *OED* stipulates the boarding experience in terms of place, services

available, and situation: a lodging place where the boarder receives meals as one

of the family for a price. Preceding discussion has established origins and physi-

cal nature of the place and addressed the economics of boarding. Examining the

services available and exploring the notion of boarders as family requires a clos-

er look at the people who lived the boardinghouse experience.

Constituents of the Boarding Household

Constituents of any given household varied with time, and naturally

households differed one to the other. The most basic household would consist of

the boardinghouse keeper and the boarder(s). More complex households could

include spouse or business partner of the boardinghouse keeper, their children,

and resident hired help. Occasional day workers added to a household popula-

tion, even if only sporadically. The dynamics of any household depended upon

the roles and functions attached to each category of occupant and how individu-

als lived their role.

Men presided in some boardinghouses, either as head of the host family

or as an individual contractor leasing the boardinghouse operation. The title for

this position was "boarding boss" (Gemignani 1982, Monette 1995b:16). For

some, the job matched the title. Andrew Bredahl, who managed the company

complex at Wells, logged over one hundred hours per week overseeing the oper-

ations.

214

As manager he was in complete charge of every aspect involved in housing and feeding 300 men seven days a week, week in and week out. [He was head cook; a night cook prepared the fourth (midnight) meal of the day.] He had to oversee the house-keeping of over 150 rooms; he ran a laundry, a butcher shop, a bakery, a kitchen, a storeroom; he had to be a disciplinarian and sometimes a counselor for both the boarders and a staff of more than thirty; [and] he was a bookkeeper responsible to the company office for the payroll deductions covering board and room charges. (Bourke 1982: 11)

Other boarding bosses also devoted their full time and attention to boardinghouse operation. A letter to George Hooper in 1917 from the Houghton office of the Denver Rock Drill Manufacturing Company refers to an Ed Gauvin of Painesdale. The letter writer, Edward Church, says of Gauvin: "He has a first class reputation there, both as a man and as a boardinghouse keeper. . . . [H]e runs a clean house and sets very good meals. Does most of the cooking himself and has a wife and grown daughter to help him" (VCM Files, Hooper correspondence).

Boarding bosses with other occupations, such as Candido Pisoni with his lumbering enterprise, generally assisted only with heavy chores or seasonally, but most probably had the final disciplinary word, no matter how much or how little they were otherwise involved in the operation of the boardinghouse.

Without more data and an investigation well beyond the scope of this study, the numbers of boarding bosses and their significance to the national boardinghouse phenomenon cannot be ascertained. On the Michigan mining ranges slight mention is made of them, particularly in proportion to references to female boardinghouse keepers. The disparity becomes more pronounced in national materials. Studies of Eastern boardinghouses give the impression they were run exclusively by women. As for the American West, it generated the image of the "Widder Brown's Boardin'house," which not only specifies a woman manager but excludes a male head of household.
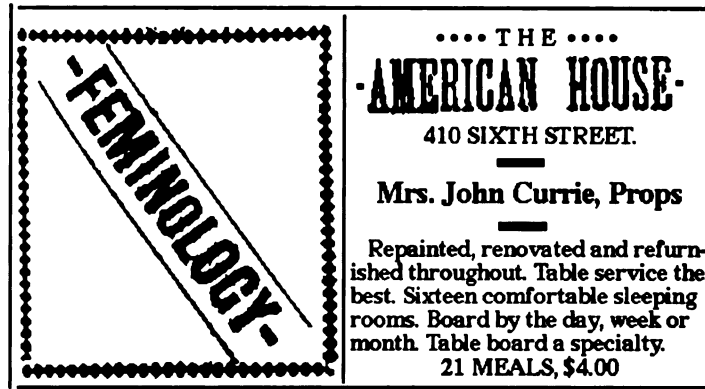
Figure 48. Calumet boardinghouse ad emphasizing the feminine. (Courtesy *Keweenaw Press*)

Scant details of individual Michigan boarding bosses characterize them as "friends in need," efficient, conscientious businessmen, and pleasant hosts. According to Clarence Monette (1995b: 16),

> If one of the boarders got into trouble, the boarding boss was usually sent for. He paid the fine and took the boarder back home. Then he arranged with the boarder to pay so much each week or even the entire amount at the end of the working month. Cases were also known when the boarding boss was arrested, the story was the same, only reversed. His boarders passed the hat and rushed to his rescue.

Alfred Nicholls' account (1968: 169) of "Big Boardinghouse Life" at Central Mine in the latter half of the nineteenth century details an evening of pipe smoking and friendly banter in the boarders' gathering room. Among the comments is a reference to the past night's conversation, in which Harry, the boarding boss, had taken part.

As the evening progresses, Harry makes two appearances. First, he introduces a new boarder, formerly an iron miner, who has transferred to the big boardinghouse from a local private house "'because he think [*sic*] he will be more comfortable here with us.'" Later, he joins the circle of conversation which has centered on one of the boarders, absent that evening because he is "sparking." As the men express their admiration for this boarder and his young lady, they decide upon a wedding gift for that eventuality. The boarding boss then

shares his secret: the wedding will indeed happen in only a month, and he pledges the boardinghouse larder for the festivities.

In this example the boarding boss is host not only by introducing and welcoming a new boarder, but by sharing social time with the group. He knows each of them by personality and personal habit, not just by name. He has shared elements of himself with them: during the conversation of the night before he had told of his home community in Cornwall. He expresses genuine interest in his boarders and is willing to share his personal resources for the wedding reception. Whatever degree of fictionalizing or idealizing has crept into Nicholls' account merely emphasizes what were considered positive qualities of boarding bosses in general. The contrast with the comic strip braggart Maj. Hoople is equally telling.

One characteristic of boarding bosses seems clear: without apparent exception, they did not work alone. Even doing much of the cooking himself, Ed Gauvin was assisted by his wife and daughter. At Central, boarding boss Harry allows how "'it do make me and the missus feel pretty good that men got such nice opinion about our house'" (Nicholls 1968:169). The succession of "house fathers" at the Wakefield *poika talo* relied on a chain of "house mothers," though rebuffing the suggestion that a house mother could run the operation herself.

Thousands of women could, and did, run boardinghouses, whether or not there was a boarding boss associated with the enterprise. With spouses fulfilling the role of boarding boss, some of these women could focus their attention more closely on one facet of the operation, the kitchen perhaps, or supervising the female staff. Young children in a household also required their time and attention. Although Andrew Bredahl nominally headed all operations at Wells, Frances Bredahl actually had charge of the baking operations and the house-keeping. She and the staff of twenty-eight young women produced seventy

loaves of bread and fifty to sixty pies every other day; washed bedding, towels, and long white tablecloths; and cleaned more than 150 rooms. She also had two children, one born the year she and Andrew took charge of the Wells operation (Bourke 1982).

The degree of responsibility the mistress of the boardinghouse assumed was dictated by family choice and ultimately by circumstance. Teresa Lucas managed her boarding household on her own although she had a husband. The Gabourie sisters, Alta and Maymie, remained spinsters; boardinghouse keeping was their life-long occupation. Anna Shaw, Selma Wiljanen, and so many others had full management responsibility thrust upon them by widowhood. Except for the scale of the operation, their job description matched Andrew Bredahl's. Those with young children were simultaneously responsible for their care.

The boardinghouse mistress was also mistress of the house, with all that nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American standards designated to that role. A woman's "spiritual calling" was to make her home a moral refuge from the outside world. This so-called cult of domesticity of the early 1800s combined with later industrial ideals to elevate the household and its female head to a new status (Cott 1977, Wright 1980, Landon 1989, Beecher and Stowe 1869, 1987, Ryan 1981): she was to be a moral paragon and "professional" housekeeper, a "domestic engineer," an efficient yet nurturing angel in an apron. Ethnic presumptions of their women imposed much the same role, particularly among the Irish and Italians. Moreover, it seems that women on the Michigan mining ranges, at least those connected with boardinghouses of whom there is record, frequently attempted to live the role and often succeeded, to the awe and appreciation of those around them.

A frequent visitor to the boardinghouse kitchen of Angelina "Grandma"

Terzaghi, a widow with three children living near Negaunee, recalls the many activities this woman managed simultaneously. On the big stove something would be cooking, polenta or maybe sausage. In the center of the room sat Mrs. Terzaghi, mending the woolen underwear of one of her boarders, her foot rocking the churn to make butter. Sitting opposite her were the three teenaged children, doing their school work under her watchful eye. Her periodic questions to them about their lessons encouraged their work and let them know how valuable their education was. Meanwhile, in a warm corner of the kitchen sat the dough box, filled with rising dough that she would bake into fresh loaves before she retired for the night (Spelgatti 1993).

While conducting a government land survey in 1873, John Longyear sought accommodation one night at a French-Canadian boardinghouse at the Champion Mine location. His bed was one of six in the loft of a single-story log structure. A drunken spree and lively dancing below kept him awake until near dawn when the last of the merrymakers succumbed to the alcohol and exhaustion and dropped into the remaining loft beds. After a short sleep, Longyear observed:

> Much to my surprise, when I descended in the morning, I found no sign of the night's revelry. The neat-looking landlady and her daughter had the house in order and a good breakfast was served. . . . After breakfast the landlady left to attend a wedding, and I was astonished to see her walk out arrayed in a silk dress and a beautiful lace shawl. She looked like a product of high civilization rather than a "grub-slinger" for a lot of booze-guzzling roustabouts. (Paul 1960: 18-19)

Not all were as accomplished, however. Schoolteacher Henry Hobart taught at the Cliff Mine Location in the early 1860s and boarded with Joseph Rawlings, Mine Engineer, and his wife. Although Hobart admits in his diary that Mrs. Rawlings treated him well enough, her cantankerous demeanor created unending mayhem and rancor in the household. "It is misery to hear the old

lady let off her wrath," he says repeatedly. She would be boss of the household, but did not know how. "The old lady [and one of her sons, reared to be equally imperious] are just alike, always mad about nothing & it is impossible to please them" (Mason 1991: 277).

The attitude and demeanor of the boardinghouse mistress seem generally to have set the tone for the house. Only the food that came from her kitchen appeared to have more impact on boarders and their satisfaction with their accommodations.

Children were also part of numerous boarding households. For them, as for their parents and the other adults around them, boarding was a way of life. The children in a boardinghouse were usually part of the host family, although a number of families in Alger County locations found it necessary to place their children with families in Marquette or other communities where they could attend school (Symon 1985). Whether a permanent or temporary part of the host family, living in a boardinghouse affected the children's chore list, perhaps, but not their obligation to help. Running a boardinghouse was certainly a family endeavor so all members of the family, even the smallest, contributed something to the effort.

Numerous individuals recall filling the woodbox as children. One young girl was assigned a bookkeeping chore. She had to fill out the weekly charge slips for each boarder and take them to the bank (Caspary 1994). Another remembers scrubbing the hardwood dining room floor every Saturday (Mather 1994). Boys did barn chores, while their sisters waited on tables (Pisoni 1994).

Isabelle Wiesen came at age seven to live with her grandmother and to assist in the operation of her boardinghouse. She was made to feel a valuable addition to the household. Her young legs managed the stairs more easily than Grandma's, so she brought foods up from the cellar, and did small chores

upstairs including carrying food trays to her bed-ridden grandfather (Fortin 1994).

Little Ruth Reippenen was only five in 1917 when her family left the lumber camp at Dunham for the newly opened iron mine at Wakefield. Her father went into the mine and her mother ran one of the Wakefield Iron Mining Company boardinghouses southeast of town. Ruth was the youngest of seven daughters, but even at her age she was entrusted with responsibility: twice each day at the appointed hours she would make her rounds of the boardinghouse clanging a large bell, awakening the boarders for their respective shift at the mine (Johnson 1993).

A common activity for some children was to carry their fathers' lunch pails to them at the mine or smelter. Mary Roti hurried home from school on her own lunch hour to pick up her father's hot lunch and carried it to him at the mine, then sat with him while he ate (Manzoline and Tousignant 1982). Another daughter who carried lunch to her father on summer days recalled their many conversations on those occasions: "I learned a lot from him" (Mather 1994).

Casual labor in and around boardinghouses came from neighborhood kids and, particularly during the Depression, hoboes who would work for a meal. Ernest Krause was only ten and newly-immigrated from Germany when he came with his family to a farm three miles from Ford River in 1887. He found employment at the Ford River company boardinghouse before and after school (Brayak 1973: 62-63).

Permanent staff came either as day laborers or were themselves boarders. Occasionally they were older women, perhaps with children, looking for a home as well as a job. The "widow lady" Evalyn Cook mentions who could be her helper and several of the cooks hired at the Endeavor fall into this category. Usually, however, staff positions were filled by young women drawn from the

local community or who had immigrated under the sponsorship of the boarding-house operators. For those immigrant women, chain migration figured heavily in their lives: many were kin to their sponsors or family friends from the same home villages. Selma Wiljanen had come to America in 1909 from Finland to work in her cousin Kalle (Charles) Henrickson's lumbering boardinghouse in Alger County. Numerous others also began their lives in America as workers in boardinghouses, and then after marriage took in boarders to finance the immigration of other family members.

Often these young women spoke no English, so their Americanization began with the assistance of the boardinghouse family. In a contrary situation, the widow running company boardinghouses at Baltic and then at Painesdale in the 1920s and 30s spoke only Italian. Her bi-lingual hired girl became "her right arm" (Caspary 1994).

American-born young women flocked to boardinghouses for work as chambermaids, kitchen help, or dining room waitresses. One daughter of the Arduin family of Hermansville was thirteen when she began working in local boardinghouses. During the summer two years later, she worked in an establishment with sixty-two boarders. There she had to do "all the kitchen chores, peel a bushel of potatoes, mop the floors and work to eight at night [she walked to work at 5 A. M.] for a dollar a day" (Whitens and Campbell 1982). Work in the boardinghouses was hard, but nevertheless attractive for both the wages and the fringe benefits—the boarders.

The boarders were—to use an old cliche—tall, short, skinny fat men, bald with lots of hair. Some were married but had left wife and family far behind. Many were quite young and single. Those who were not American-born represented more than forty nationalities across the world. Some had come great distances to the mining region of Michigan in search of a new life; others had been

born there, but families too large and resources too slim had sent them out on their own. They all came to the boardinghouses in search of a home. Croatian immigrant Steve Brayak tells the story of thousands:

> "I worked in Pittsburgh for eight months and then decided to come to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. We took a train to Escanaba, arriving here on November 1, 1913. From the depot, we took a streetcar down Ludington Street, where I rode to the end of the line. I got off and waited half an hour until another streetcar came along. It was cold and lonely. The weather was very cold and snowy. I took the streetcar back to North Escanaba where I stopped at Skradski's. In those days everybody went to Skradski's because Mirko Skradski could speak English and he helped us. At Skradski's I met Jake Saber and he took me to his boarding house. There were 20 men staying there at that time. I looked for a job but I didn't get one until Christmas Eve.
> . . . It was a very cold night. It was not the best Christmas Eve I ever spent, but at least I had [a home and] a job." (Delta County 1978: 25)

These were the people who made up the boarding households: boarding bosses, spinsters, wives and widows, children, staff, and the boarders. Their interactions shaped the boardinghouse experience.

Boarding and the Notion of Family

Boarding is defined in terms of family. The boarder receives bed and board *as one of the family*. Determining what this means in practical terms requires an examination of the records and recollections of those who lived the experience to establish as closely as possible the relationships they developed between themselves, and what those relationships meant to them. To what degree did a boarding household become "family" and how is that term to be defined?

One important point to emphasize is that at least some boarding situations were kin-based. Census records show brothers and brothers-in-law, sisters, cousins, and nieces of the host family as boarders. Of the 195 Marquette addresses with boarders in 1886-87, twenty-four show at least one boarder with
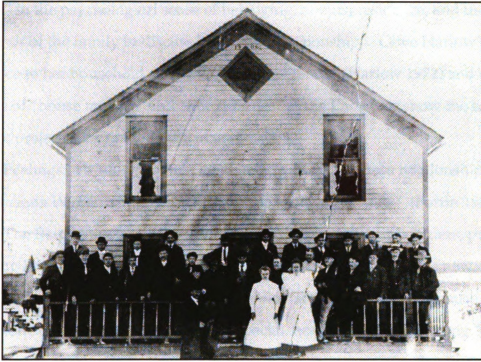
Figure 49. Boardinghouse "family" outside its Wakefield home. (Courtesy Bruce Cox and Wakefield Historical Society)

the same last name as the host family. A photo in the collection of the Marquette County Historical Society illustrates the point: it is a typical boardinghouse photo with all the residents and staff arranged in front of the house. Hand printing across the face identifies it as the "Kristian Wiik Boarding House." Names of the individuals, also printed on the face of the photo, identify seven of the seventeen people as Wiiks. Newspaper articles and family accounts also place kin as boarders. In some instances, then, the boarding household was literally family, extended family at least.

The overwhelming majority of boardinghouses brought together unrelated individuals, yet surrogate family relationships seem prevalent, even leading to fictive kin designations. The women of the boardinghouses, "depending on their ages, . . . were mother-sister-bride images to the lonely men" (Wasastjerna 1957: 321). In contrast to Horwitz's (1973) findings regarding the Lowell mill girls, the Michigan boarders commonly described their housing experience as

"home" in the psychological sense of belonging, not just residence, and used the metaphor of the family to discuss household relationships. Olive Harlow's diary reference to her household as "a family of 40 persons" (Harlow 1972) and designations of "house mother" and "house father" at the Endeavor show the same concept projected from the house management.

Feelings of affinity, not just labels, also grew from these relationships. Two of Anna Wiesen's boarders became "the same as her sons" (Fortin 1994).

The Reippenen family grew very close to many of their boarders, primarily young Finns who had come from Republic to Wakefield when the new mine opened. They continued contact long after the family quit boardinghouse operation. None of these boarders was more special, however, than the young Bill Fletcher about whom Mrs. Reippenen said, "God gave me seven daughters, and now a son." Fletcher had been turned away from all the other boardinghouses when he tried to find accommodation, but Mrs. Reippenen welcomed him to her home and her family. Why had Fletcher been turned away elsewhere? He was black (Johnson 1993).

The surrogate family relationship in boardinghouses has been widely demonstrated and accepted. From an intensive study of household relationships in Boston, Mark Peel (1986) concludes, "Boarding ideally functioned as a surrogate for the family, shielding transient individuals from the uprooting forces of migration" (813). Among British immigrants to Canada, networks of family and friends proved crucial to the immigrants' economic and social survival in their new land. Obligations of the host family, whether or not actual kin, included providing shelter, "advice on social and cultural norms, help in finding a job and assistance in a hundred other ways" (McCormack 1984: 358). In Michigan's mining districts, that British migratory link became so pronounced and defined, its complexity could be conveyed by the term "Cousin Jack."

Each migrating group used the process: Steve Brayak illustrates it in operation. So does the Tassin family of Ishpeming who took in Italian immigrants without charge, finding them jobs and helping to socialize them into the community. Only some of those they helped through their free boardinghouse were actual kin (Manzoline and Tousignant 1982).

"Another crucial aspect of boardinghouse life that is related to the image of the boardinghouse as surrogate family is the extent to which boarders shared characteristics with their 'surrogate parents'" (Landon 1989: 42). Michigan data demonstrates the same sorts of correlations between boarders and the boardinghouse hosts in terms of ethnicity, occupation, and status noted in other American studies (Hareven and Modell 1973, Peel 1986, Landon 1989, Byington 1910).

Studies of boardinghouse economics suggest additional links to the surrogate family notion. David Landon argues that the "apparent social acceptability of boardinghouse keeping [as an economic endeavor for women] was also based on the image of the boardinghouse as a surrogate family" (1989: 42). An important study of urban boardinghouse families contends that boarding was linked to the life cycle of the family, young boarders entering a household at the time that grown children had "left the nest," replacing the lost support of the children with boarder income. Moreover, this replacement fits into a larger pattern of family adaptation, combining and re-combining nuclear, extended, and surrogate family relationships to demonstrate the boarding household's malleability (Hareven and Modell 1973).

The strong division of labor along traditional gender lines in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Upper Michigan makes Landon's argument attractive for the boardinghouses there, but it is equally important to recognize the relative lack of viable alternatives for women's employment, the necessity for their income, and the strong manipulation of housing by the mining companies. In

that context, the social acceptability of women taking in boarders could grow from necessity.

Hareven and Modell's (1973) model of the aging parents accepting boarders as surrogate children also seems to have some support from the Michigan data. It has been suggested, for example, that Mary Fellman had boarders in her later years more to ease loneliness than for the income (Evensen). Isabelle Wiesen boarded with her grandmother rather than living with her parents because Annie Wiesen had had sons, no daughters. Therefore, a female family member of the next generation was designated to serve the helper role in Annie's domestic enterprise (Fortin 1994). Boardinghouse families without sons are also known to have taken in young men as surrogates to help with heavy

Figure 50. Oskar Maki family and boarders, Wakefield. (Courtesy Bruce Cox and Wakefield Historical Society)

chores (Bernhardt 1981: 89) and widows exchanged room and board for heavy chore work from retired miners (Caspary 1994).

However, boarders can also be understood as a means to manipulate the family life cycle (Hareven and Modell 1973). In this light, newlyweds would seem to have brought in boarders as surrogate adult children, providing a stronger economic base for the new household before actual children were even born. Considering the prevalence of boarders in Michigan homes with young children, it was apparently worth the economic advantage to continue boarding these adult "children" through the next phase of family development. Female boarders providing domestic help served the role of adult daughters. For both widows and spinsters, boarders were economic surrogates for husbands, allowing women to postpone marriage (or re-marriage) indefinitely if they chose.

Therefore, the boardinghouse as a surrogate family offered advantages to both the boarders and to the host family. It also demanded a clear set of limits on members of the household. These limits varied between households, and occasionally were at variance with the surrounding community.

The Nuclear Family in Relation to the Boarders

Some boarders and boardinghouse managers preferred a degree of detachment. On their own time, boarders could pursue whatever amusements were available, so they could limit contact with the host family to mealtimes, if they chose. Generally the men would leave the table and convene in their smoking room to read the newspaper, talk, or play cards. The rest of their day was usually spent at work.

In a number of houses, the press of work limited the time the host family could spend with the boarders. Erma Caspary (1994) reports that when the evening meal was finished and the men left the table, her mother threw the latch

on the dining room door. "She was done with them until she sounded the buzzer next morning to say breakfast was ready." The dining room was not only the physical link between the host family quarters and the gathering room for the boarders, it was the venue for much of the social interchange between the boarders and their host(s).

In other houses, members of the host family made themselves more accessible and close relationships sometimes developed. The interchange between Harry, the boarding boss at Central Mine, and his boarders shows this. So do the Reippenen family and Annie Wiesen with their respective "sons."

The issue of closeness, particularly how close was too close, often arose in households with children. Ironically, the very quality that Landon argues contributed to the respectability of boarding-houses, the notion of surrogate family, became a focus of attack for the reformers of the 1880s onward.

Unrelated residents treated as family, particularly when living in a family home as opposed to the institutional boardinghouses, were perceived as a threat to the sanctity and morality of the nuclear family. When one Houghton County mining family announced in 1911 it was relocating to a newly-developing mine in Iron County a few miles distant from the nearest town and that the wife would be operating a boardinghouse there while her husband became mine engineer, the neighbors were aghast. What of the influences on the children?! they objected (Bernhardt 1981: 389). When the Cordes family purchased and expanded the Bay View House in Menominee, Pauline Cordes' sisters prophesied only disaster for the seven Cordes children (raised in "that atmosphere" surely the boys would all grow up to be "drunkards and gamblers," and the girls . . . !) (Knuth 1993).

House rules prevailed. In the Durocher household at Freda, the men's areas were completely off-limits to the children except for the eldest who cleaned

and changed beds, and then only when the men were gone (Guilbault 1994). At the Bay View, the Cordes children were forbidden to associate with the boarders or to go into the bar room. They were allowed to play in the dining room between meals (Knuth 1993). Spatial divisions were also enforced for the Schmidt children, though some interchange with the boarders occurred in the more public portions of the house. There was a small candy counter just outside the dining room. Lillian, the youngest, was allowed to operate it, to her delight, since the men would often give her a couple of pennies or a nickel from their change (Mather 1994).

Even with strict supervision, the children seem at times to have forged links between the boarders and their parents, or at least to have generated a special friend for themselves. One of the boarders with the Schmidts, a Mr. Larson, was a kindly older gentleman who "looked just like Santa Claus." When Lillian was small, she sat on his lap and they talked and played. In later years, Mr. Larson would watch from the front porch of the boardinghouse for Lillian's ride to school and give her a call at just the right moment, so she never had to wait outside for the streetcar or bus (Mather 1994).

For five-year-old Ruth Reippenen, the houseful of boarders at Wakefield were doting "big brothers" or "uncles." It was Ruth who made her way throughout the facility twice per day with her bell, awakening the men for their work shift. When they sat playing cards in their gathering room, she moved from table to table, chattering with the men and hopping up on a lap occasionally. Ruth's coin bank found its way each evening to the cleared dining room table, and every day she emptied it of a few pennies (Johnson 1993). Her mother's acceptance of all the young men as family, and particularly Bill Fletcher, set the tone for this easy relationship between Ruth and the boarders. If the boardinghouse women were surrogate mothers and sisters for the lonely boarders,

children such as Ruth filled at least some of the void of separation from younger siblings or their own children.

Leo Pisoni's recollections of growing up in his mother's boardinghouse are similar in several ways to Ruth's. For example, the boarders gave the Pisoni children cash for holiday gifts and Leo looked upon the boarders as fictive family. He learned how to play cards at a young age under their tutorial. Lessons also extended to tolerance and understanding of differences between people, especially in the multi-ethnic boardinghouse. Leo, like Ruth Reippenen, learned about racial identity at home. A team of black laborers hired to develop a new mine shaft were housed in the Pisoni home. Never before having seen someone with such dark skin, the five-year-old Leo innocently asked one of the boarders why he never washed his face. Good-naturedly the boarder explained that "he was what he was" (Pisoni 1994).

Lessons went the other direction, too. Mary Manzoline (1994) recalled being eagerly questioned each day about what new words she had learned in school, so anxious were the family's three Italian boarders to develop their English skills.

Neighborhood children also developed relationships with boarders. Esther Prince was about fourteen during the big copper strike. She lived in Houghton between two boardinghouses, one that housed townsmen, the other designated for the imported "scabs." It was a dangerous time, with violence in the streets and drive-by shootings into homes. Esther's mother imposed a number of restrictions on her daughter's movements. One activity she did not prevent, however, proved very lucrative for the girl. In later years, Esther recalled:

> Incidentally, living by those boardinghouses was kind of convenient for me. The boarders would often get too lazy to go to Quincy to get their money from the pay office. I was big enough to be trusted so they would give me all their slips and their names and the permit to get their

money and I would come home with a bag of money of over a thousand dollars every time. When I think of it now, I get the shivers but each of the fellows would give me a dime or quarter or whatever they felt like giving me, so it was like a goldmine to me when I was a little girl. (Prince 1975)

Like the biological daughters in the household, resident female domestics (and to a lesser degree young female day workers) also required the watchful eye and moral protection of the host family, particularly the "house mother." A discussion below explores the variety of ways, to that end, the mistress of the house involved herself in the lives of her boarders, both male and female.

Behavioral Reactions to Architectural Separation

One body of house rules specifically addressed the identity of the nuclear family and lines of privacy. In many boardinghouses architectural divisions were generally consistent with practice. In the big company houses, meals were served to the men in the dining room; the host family ate together in their own quarters. Where there was resident staff—essentially a second set of boarders—mealtimes could result in double segregation: men in the dining room, family in the kitchen or their own dining room, and staff in the kitchen after everyone else was served. On the other hand, in small family homes boarders and family often ate together, giving rise to the popular exaggeration of Maj. Hoople dominating the table and staring down anyone taking too large a portion.

The HPS helped define activity areas and private family space. Some families purposefully used this architectural configuration to emphasize division. When the Cordes family transformed the Bay View from a single three-story structure to a triple-section telescope, they architecturally defined and segregated the four main activity areas (boarder sleeping, family sleeping, dining room and kitchen) and the two resident groups. A periodically locked door between dining room and boarders' parlor, as above, or the locked door between

upstairs sleeping quarters of the Schmidt family and their boarders clearly relegated the timing and degree of division, as well as placement of the line, under the control of the boardinghouse keeper.

The lines of privacy blurred and were occasionally ignored, however, as behavior confronted the built environment. In the Schmidt house at the Delta Chemical Location, for example, boarders were free to help themselves to leftover pie and pastry from the pantry throughout the evening. To do so, they had to pass through the dining room and the kitchen and past the door to the family quarters. In this case, the kitchen and pantry, ordinarily off limits to boarders, became accessible when their presence posed no functional conflict. The door to the family dining room and parlor moved the line of privacy, but maintained it (Mather 1994).

In the Durocher boardinghouse at Freda, the boarding teachers "were just like family," sharing with the family the side entrance and the second-floor accommodations; the family remained more personally and physically aloof from the male boarders, however, who had a separate entrance and occupied the third-floor.

More subtle issues of privacy and definition of family are also embedded within spatial use, however. In some cases, it seems the drive to acquire a family house was not to live the social ideal of America's reformers, i.e., the single-family home as an island of privacy against the rest of the world, with separate spaces for each family member. A pre-World War II study of Italians in America and a recent compilation of immigrant oral histories demonstrate that Italians understood acquiring a home as an obligation not just to house the nuclear family, but to provide for extended family and the paesani (Cohen 1982: 299; Stave, Sutherland and Salerno 1994: 111).

On the Michigan mining ranges, both the generally higher incidence of

Italian households with boarders and direct testimony from descendants of those early mining families confirm this conclusion. Thus the inclusion of boarders within the household and the resultant crowding, both social evils in the eyes of reformers, were ethnically-based social positives reaffirming kinship and friendship obligations.

Moreover, many of the ethnic groups that became heavily represented on the mining ranges came from similar experiences and had developed similar social philosophies. Cohen (1982) points to conflicts between American middle-class ideals and working-class priorities based in Old World cultural baggage. "Many people from rural backgrounds were used to sharing a bedroom—and sometimes even a bed—with other family members," she notes (299). Therefore, for example, whatever crowding the Lucas family and their boarders had to endure should not have been particularly repugnant to them.

Nor were crowded boarding accommodations limited to immigrants from rural Europe. An account by one of fourteen American-born settlers who occupied an early dwelling at Marquette reveals numerous strategies employed by those forced into tight quarters. Charles Johnson had built a small, four-room house with a lean-to in 1850 for himself and his wife. Soon the household expanded dramatically, although the house had not. By 1851, the occupants included Mrs. Johnson's niece and two other nuclear families, a total of seven adults and seven children. Cooking and laundry were done in the lean-to or outside. The children amused themselves outside during the day, and the men were gone to jobs.

At night, the residents arranged themselves "very comfortably and well." Each family had a room. The boys slept on the floor. With little furniture besides beds, a few chairs, a couple of bureaus and a table, there was ample space. Other comforts were improvised: "'Our sideboards were stumps around

the house; for sofas we had the moss-covered rocks or the sand heaps . . . while for bath rooms we had all of Lake Superior'" (Chat 1888: 8,1).

Despite idealists' encouragement of parlors as a middle-class aspiration, a number of the Michigan mining families preferred to gather around their kitchen tables to socialize. Also, Cohen notes, "workers' parlors frequently doubled as sleeping rooms at night" (301). By relegating herself and her children to the two small upstairs rooms and assigning the rest of her home to boarders, Mary Zager had indeed made whatever parlor space she had into boarder accommodation. At the Mohawk boardinghouse the parlor space became the dining room (Boggio 1982). In the smaller homes with boarders, such as the Victoria cabins, the dining area was the only socializing space available. After sharing a meal, resident family members and boarders would sit around the table together play-ing cards, or singing while someone played a fiddle, possibly drinking home-made wine. On the Michigan mining ranges, in location and town family hous-ing which comprised the majority of boarding establishments, the *OED* defini-tion of the boardinghouse was most fully realized.

Boardinghouse Life

The variety and inconsistent nature of the Michigan boarding-house data identifies numerous boardinghouses and those who operated or boarded within them but tantalizingly few details of their lives. From the scattering of recollec-tions, many generated from pioneer settlers and their families in response to anniversary celebrations of the mining communities, a limited sense of boarding-house life does emerge.

Rules and Relationships

Rules imposed by the boardinghouse keeper, most often attributed to the mistress of the house, would presumably provide for the smooth operation of

the household. Many of those recalled, however, reveal a motherly or moralistic interest in the boarders and in the hired staff, and a conscious attempt to curb boisterous behavior that would offend community sensibilities.

The personal interest of the matrons in the lives of their boarders extended to issues of finances and health. More than one boardinghouse keeper steered her boarders away from excessive drinking and encouraged then to open a savings account at the local bank. Sarah McCullough in Cedar River promoted sobriety among her boarders even to the point of locking them in their rooms to keep them away from drink; she nevertheless failed to reform "one nimble young boarder who . . . used to escape [through] the transom." Her reform efforts were not totally in vain, however. "She was responsible for several savings accounts which led to marriages, with their steadying influences . . ." (Worth 1953).

Boardinghouse keepers also established a few iron-clad rules for behavior in and about the house. Sarah McCullough forbade cardplaying, and burned any deck of cards she found in the house (Worth 1953). Teresa Lucas prohibited gambling and rough behavior (Frimodig 1990: 75). One matron in Monticello insisted that the men use the privy or the thunder mugs. Anyone availing himself of a bush or tree in the yard would have to find another home (Peterson, Bednar, and Maurin 1993). Her concern was far from trivial: newlyweds Selma and Ted Broadlands in Sagola moved out of their honeymoon cottage because the men in the boardinghouse next door made a habit of urinating out the second floor windows onto their yard (Ertel 1986: 148).

Boardinghouse mistresses also monitored the activities of the young ladies in their employ. The reputation of the house was at stake, as well as that of the young women. A boardinghouse mistress who allowed her staff to carry on indecently stood to lose respectable boarders, responsible staff, and the good

will of the mining company and of the community at large. Moreover, for those women who sponsored immigrating sisters, cousins, and neighbors, maintaining respectability was important to their good name on both sides of the ocean. Accidental breaches of decorum did occur, such as when one young chambermaid went in to strip a boarder's bed and make it up fresh, only to discover him lying there, fast asleep, when she pulled back the bedding (Brunet 1994). The deep embarrassment of both the boarder and the girl merely reinforced the social standards so innocently broken.

Home Economics

An earlier chapter addresses in detail the general costs of boardinghouse operation and methods of payment by the boarders. The decisions made by some boardinghouse operators indicate their priorities were occasionally, and purposefully, at odds with the fiscal bottom line or conversely, to maintain their income they had to be ready to exercise considerable autonomy despite the pervasiveness of company policies and influence.

The Tassin household maintained a free boardinghouse for paesani who needed assistance. Jake Saber took Steve Brayak to his boardinghouse where he received accommodation while he was still unemployed. Frank Valela was allowed to work off his room and board by baby sitting for the three children of his host family and to help his landlady with heavy chores around the house (Valela 1983). During strikes and other economic bad times, it appears common that the boarding household, like a family, simply pulled together, adjusting or suspending fees until the emergency abated.

On occasion, boardinghouse keepers refused boarders on principle, and therefore refused the income as well. When union organizers sought a foothold in Delta County, they came to the Delta Chemical and Iron Company

boardinghouse operated by the Schmidts. The Schmidts were allowed under company policy to reject or accept potential boarders as they saw fit. Ida Schmidt refused rooms to the union organizers, believing it wrong that they should expect shelter in a facility of the company they were attacking (Mather 1994).

During the periodic hard times of the boom-bust cycles on the mining frontier, men occasionally came to the kitchen door of the boardinghouses hoping for a meal. "You don't have to invite me in, ma'am," they would say, and then suggested a chore they might do in exchange for the food they were prepared to gulp on the doorstep. Even with the slim economics in a boardinghouse where some of the boarders might be unemployed, the boardinghouse keepers were sometimes generous.

The Reippenen household was one (Johnson 1993). Another was the Schmidts'. Ida invited the men in to clean up and offered them a seat with the boarders, though some were ashamed and ate only in the kitchen. If they did not offer to work for their meal, Ida assigned a chore. Nevertheless, she had to remind the men that she could not continue to feed them (Mather 1994).

Boardinghouse keepers were free to be as generous as they could afford, but mining companies and local law enforcement moved against those who would take advantage of them and thereby threatened the individuals and the institution of boarding. The case of one such fellow, William H. Cruse, was reported in the Mining Gazette in January, 1863. Employed at the Cliff Mine, Cruse "'lit out'" and "left his board and washing unpaid." In order to "make an example of him," the law was called and Cruse was arrested near Calumet. Although he escaped while being transported back to Clifton, his arrest demonstrates the import placed on supporting the boarding system, at least so long as it was in the interests of the companies.

On other occasions, however, the economic realities brought boarding-house managers and local mining companies into conflict. Anna Pisoni (1973) recalled that mining company officials tried to dictate to her in her private establishment.

> It was one Fourth of July, I remember. He said to me, "Do you have many Finlanders?" I said maybe a dozen. Well, he said to me, "Don't take to board no more Finns. They're a kind of bull-headed guy," he said, "And it's very hard to boss them!" I said, "I gotta make a living, too." I didn't have very much trouble. They behaved.

Romances and Indiscretions

The relative shortage of women throughout the mining region and particularly at the locations generated considerable interest in romance when the opportunity presented itself. As surrogate mothers for their boarders, as actual mothers of resident daughters, and as employers of young female workers, the boardinghouse mistresses had cause to become involved in the sexual and romantic activities of those in their houses.

"Grandma" Terzaghi acted as matchmaker for her young Italian boarders. She knew many families in her native Lombardy who had daughters and when she figured it was time for one of her reliable fellows to marry, she set the wheels in motion and shortly a demure young woman would arrive at the Negaunee train station. If the intended groom seemed unwilling, any number of her other boarders volunteered to take his place (Spelgatti 1993).

Actually, numerous couples met in boardinghouses, even without the assistance of the mistress of the house, but that would not necessarily preclude her giving advice about the match. Many hired girls married boarders they had met at work and no sooner would they set up housekeeping than they would take in boarders themselves. Domenica Debernardi was a seamstress living with her sister in Quinnesec. Hired to do some sewing in the Iron Mountain

boardinghouse run by Peter and Tereza Feira, Domenica met Serafino Borla, one of their boarders working in the Chapin Mine. Romance blossomed and they married in May, 1899 (Dulan 1978: 153).

In other cases, a daughter of the house found her fellow among the resident men. Selma Kuivila met John Wiljanen at her cousin's boardinghouse and they married within three months (Larson 1988). The William Martens family operated a boardinghouse in Ford River. Their daughter Petronella (Nellie) helped manage the house that accommodated 200-250 men. Frederick Weissert worked as a baker for this large operation. Frederick and Nellie had a June wedding in 1883 (Delta County 1978: 20). Elma Marie Maki of Amasa married Finnish immigrant Nestor Holm, one of her mother's boarders; Marino Kenney, an Italian miner in Amasa, boarded with the LiBardi family, went to war, and returned in 1919 to claim the LiBardis' daughter Josephine as his bride (Koski 1992: 183, 159).

Despite the conscientiously motherly relationship most of the boardinghouse mistresses maintained toward their boarders, it was inevitable that some would choose a different relationship. An observation in Davidoff's (1979: 91) examination of English boarding-house landladies applies to those in Michigan as well: "'Three evils . . . most commonly break up marriages: they are selfishness, greed and lodgers [boarders].'" On the mining ranges, indiscretions involving mistresses of the boardinghouse led to wry and sometimes tragic result.

"Star boarders" were those men who were fed and housed without charge at the discretion of the landlady, generally in exchange for special attentions. A star boarder "was a grown up 'teacher's pet' at the least and a gigolo at worst" (Nicholas and Larson 1972:49).

At one South Range boardinghouse a boarder was sarcastically known by

the others as the "boarding boss," a jibe prompted by what was obviously a special relationship between the mistress of the house and this fellow. Sundays were usually chicken dinner days, but the boarders noticed that the chickens were peculiar—they never seemed to have any legs! One Monday morning a boarder decided to play a hunch. He left extra early, "accidently" taking the lunchpail of the "boarding boss." Sure enough! He found those chicken legs, a discovery he shared with his fellow boarders (Caspary 1994).

An item in the local paper in May, 1882, revealed that a couple keeping a boardinghouse near the Wheat Mine (vicinity of Negaunee) had hired a handyman named Dave. Apparently Dave was also handy in the romance department, as he and the lady of the house decided to elope. They packed their clothes into his trunk which he then took with him to Marquette. She was to catch the train from Negaunee and meet her lover. Her husband discovered the plan, followed her, and brought her home where she remained with a very scanty wardrobe (Nicholas and Larson 1972:46).

One of the most notorious incidents on the Keweenaw and a particularly gruesome example of its ilk was reported in the *Mining Gazette* for December 13, 1862. Mr. and Mrs. Harris ran a boardinghouse at the Cliff Mine. One of the boarders was Richards, the company blacksmith. Harris, who worked underground at the mine on the night shift, discovered his wife and Richards were pursuing an affair while he was at work. He dismissed Richards from the house, but Richards persisted in his attentions to Mrs. Harris.

Harris plotted revenge. He pretended to go to work and then waited under the porch. When he heard Richards with his wife, he came in through a window, an axe in hand. Fearing his wife and her lover might attack him, Harris called to the boarders for assistance. The boarders disarmed Harris and kept the warring parties apart for a short while, until Harris found the opportunity to

snatch a loaded double-barreled gun he had hidden and to shoot Richards just below the heart. A boarder took away the gun as Harris threatened his wife with the other barrel, whereupon Harris grabbed the axe and split open Richards' face, finally killing him.

Stranger still was the story of Elizabeth (Winnen) Northcott and her "boarder" William Henry Thomas. Elizabeth married a fellow Cornishman about 1872 and they had three children before he died near Quinnesec in 1881 of miners' consumption. As was often the case, the widow took in a boarder for support. In this case the arrangement lasted until she died in 1927, and then the community learned that William Thomas had been her second husband, not a boarder, for the past thirty-seven years (Cummings 1991: 338).

Not all relationships between boarders and their landladies were illicit or covert, of course. Sisters Lola and Clara Konell were forced into self-support by their father who could not provide for his eighteen children. They left the Wisconsin family farm and came to Bates Township in Iron County to operate a miners' boardinghouse. Bulgarian Dick Stoychoff was relieved to find a board-inghouse that catered to non-English speaking miners. He apparently was even more pleased with one of the landladies, Lola Konell, and they married soon after he took up residence (Bates Boosters 1985: 172-73).

Food

Food was, of course, what distinguished a *boardinghouse* from a lodging or rooming house. From colonial times scattered reports of terrible cooking and disgusting fare in boardinghouses help emphasize just how important food was to the boardinghouse resident (Pillsbury 1990). Northern Michigan boarders produced their own observations on the boardinghouse meals.

Henry Hobart complained bitterly about the Cornish diet and the scanty rations he was served by Mrs. Rawlings: "There is a great scarcity in the eating

line—no meat, stale butter, old molasses & white bread . . . no pies or anything inviting." Breakfast was especially disappointing: "dry bread and water." The butter was so filthy he was revolted by its presence on the table. Hobart, a native of Vermont, longed for a home-cooked Yankee meal and when away from home purchased and consumed buckets of fresh oysters and other treats. Better cooks who served the meals he preferred were available among the seven boardinghouses at Clifton at that time, but Hobart's teacher salary and his own frugality kept him where he was (Mason 1991).

Comments about substandard boardinghouse food entered the folk culture of the region, producing satirical—and probably apocryphal—stories. One is told about the boardinghouse at Copper Falls, built in 1854, and kept by James Rosewarne in 1872 and by Nels Lind in 1901. According to the story,

> it seems that a cook decided to play a little game on a grumbling boarder by serving him a piece of shoe leather instead of beefsteak. "You've changed your butcher, Mrs.?" inquired the boarder, looking up at the landlady, after sawing two or three minutes at the leather. "Same butcher as usual," replied the boarding mistress, with a patronizing smile. "Why?" "Oh, nothing much," said the boarder, trying to make an impression on the leather with his knife and fork, "only this piece of meat is the tenderest I have had in this house for many weeks." (Monette 1978a: 12)

Although the boardinghouses in Michigan's western Upper Peninsula did not necessarily rival first class restaurants and despite individual bad experiences, meals generally seem to have been plentiful and hearty so long as supplies were available. According to one well-fed boarder at Fayette: "If you don't get fat, it's not the fault of the house" (*Schoolcraft County Pioneer* 23 December, 1882 in Fayette Scrapbook).

Supplies, however, could be troublesome, especially in the first decades of development when there were many miners, much wilderness, but few farmers or stores. Isolation during the winter when shipping stopped also created hardship.

Fresh beef was a particularly rare treat in the early years. Thus it was with obvious relish that Olive Harlow recorded in her diary on November 6, 1849: "Mr. James Hillyard brought the wild cow from Grand Island—now for roast beef, A la Mode beef, beef soup, beef steak, puddings, mince pies and tallow candles." The feast began the next evening with a "dinner of roast beef, boiled onions, corn cake and suet pudding." Ten days later, Olive recorded that she and one helper "cut apples and meat to make 20 mince pies" (Harlow 1972).

The American Boardinghouse was one of several in Marquette in 1850, the year after the town's founding. Records of food purchases indicate what the residents were eating, suggesting that the fare was not particularly ethnic. It also seemed dependent upon wild and seasonal foods to supplement barrels of shipped supplies, further evidence of the importance of kitchen gardens and the mining companies' crops in cutover land.

According to local historian Ernest Rankin (1967), who had occasion to examine the American House account book for July, 1850, to August, 1852, daily entries appeared for potatoes at one dollar per bushel and fish for 2.5¢ per pound. Frequently there were large hams and occasionally barrels of pork or beef in brine. The proprietor traded various goods for fresh venison and bear meat.

Other starches besides potatoes anchored the diet. Flour by the barrel and saleratus by the pound probably became mountains of bread and biscuits. Rice (nine cents per pound) and cheese and crackers at a shilling (12.5¢) per pound each were abundant.

Bushels of dried apples were likely stewed or baked into pies. Fresh fruit was virtually unavailable by shipment, though local plants produced berries in summer. Much of the diet was, of necessity, seasonal.

Large quantities of fresh green beans in August suggest local gardens

were harvesting. Entries for alum, crocks, vinegar, sugar, and cucumbers herald-
ed the canning season. Late summer purchases of dried beans (two dollars per
barrel) and corn meal signal preparations for the coming winter.

The ledger also listed certain extravagances which suggest a festive holi-
day season at the boardinghouse: a pound of ginger (twenty-five cents) and
three of cinnamon ($1.87), other spices, a keg of currants ($6.75), buckwheat
flour, raisins, and two cans of oysters ($2.25).

However, not all boarders in Marquette fared as well during the winter of
1850-51. A modest building put up by pioneer Joseph Bignall served as a board-
inghouse for more than a century, and according to a *Mining Journal* account, the
only food remaining when the first supply boat arrived in the spring of 1851 was
"a small amount of dried beans and flour" (A & P 1963).

Nor were short provisions unique to Marquette. Another *Mining Journal*
report notes that one year provisions had run out in Cedar River before the
spring boat from Green Bay arrived. The Irish serving girl at the boardinghouse
reportedly said, "'God be thanked; I won't have to get up in the morning for
there's no breakfast to get'" (Worth 1956).

Development of towns and cities, including food entrepreneurs produc-
ing everything from baked goods to macaroni, plus the railroad connection to
the rest of the nation contributed to a larger and more versatile market basket for
U.P. boarders. In fact, the merits of a boardinghouse were judged on its meals—
quality, quantity, and variety —over other factors such as cleanliness or even
cost.

Less favored were those where the menu offered little variety and spon-
taneity. Olive Harlow's diary entry for August 31, 1849, illustrates this regiment-
ed housewifery: "Having had baked beans yesterday, therefore this is the day *in
regular rotation* for ham" [italics mine].

At many boardinghouses the fare was basic American stews and roasts or fish, augmented with potatoes and other root vegetables, freshly baked bread and rolls, and pie for dessert. Yankee recipes and procedures were prevalent, so even among immigrant cooks and the illiterate, American (generally East Coast) foodways passed from kitchen to kitchen. To aid the process, cook books designed to adapt traditional East Coast dishes to the tastes and foods of the West were available early in the mining era (Collins 1851).

Breakfast could be ham and eggs, or mountains of pancakes, bacon or sausage, and pie. The midday meal would be a heavy dinner if the men worked close by and came home to eat, or substantial sandwiches or the like packed into an oval, tin container to be eaten at the job site.

Ethnic foods and dishes, however, gained a stronghold in many American immigrant enclaves, including the cosmopolitan mining frontier of Michigan. The Cornish pasty has become almost synonymous with the miner's packed meal, but many ethnic foods were introduced and perpetuated in the Michigan mining areas, often through the boardinghouses.

The pasty, however, illustrates a modal change in U.P. foodways. An efficient form in which to carry a hearty meal, this large hand-held turnover, the standard meal for miners and farmers in Cornwall, was adopted by numerous ethnic kitchens in the Great Lakes mining region and the ingredients and presentation modified according to individual ethnic taste, inducing some groups such as the Finns and Italians to lay proprietary claim to the dish. In their original form in Cornwall, pasties were likely to contain any number and variety of ingredients: "bacon and egg, beef and potato, lamb and parsley, venison, fish, apple" all enclosed in a sturdy crust (Lockwood and Lockwood 1987:364).

In Michigan the Cornish version standardized, its fillings of chopped meat (beef, beef/pork mixture, or venison) placed at one end, potatoes and other

root vegetables in the center, and fruit at the other end, affording a balanced meal including dessert when consumed one end to the other (Root 1976: 309). Variations eliminate the fruit and intermix the rest of the filling, which often includes onions, turnips, rutabaga, or carrots. Gravy, catsup, butter, tomato juice, beer, tea, or buttermilk as mandatory accompaniment are additional later innovations (Lockwood and Lockwood 1987: 365). Thus the idea or form of the pasty was widely adopted because it represented an efficient solution to an industry-related problem, but its specific recipe and ethnic identity were not swallowed intact.

Additional Cornish foods still popular included scalded cream, saffron buns, and 'eavy cake. Scandinavian specialties were limpa, a rye and molasses bread, *vinabulla* (wine buns), Christmas sausage and potato sausage. (An appendix contains several recipes from these northern Michigan boardinghouses.)

Memories of life in an Italian boardinghouse include regional food specialties such as polenta, ravioli, gnocchi, risotto ala Milanese, sausages, cheeses, and invariably the homemade wine. Communities would order entire railroad boxcars of California grapes, distribute the fruit amongst the families, and then share in the labor of making each household's supply of wine for the coming year. So ingrained was wine to the culture that every provision was made by those in the community to see that each household was supplied.

"Grandma" Terzaghi's boardinghouse lacked cellar space to accommodate the wine barrels necessary for herself and her boarders. The Spelgatti residence down the street had ample space, however, so the boardinghouse wine supply was laid down in the Spelgatti cellar and ready access given to each boarder. As was customary in numerous other Italian boardinghouses, each man had his own bottle which he kept by his place at the table. As necessity

dictated, he would visit the cellar and then pay the house mistress for each fill-up (Spelgatti 1980, 1993, Boggio 1982).

Many boardinghouse keepers were sensitive to their boarders' occasional yearnings for a taste of home, so even where the fare was generally American, special requests were often honored, given a few days' lead time. Occasions such as a boarder's wedding or birthday might also receive recognition with something special from the kitchen. There is even record of a boarder with an ulcer being fed a special diet, necessitating individual meal preparation for him three times daily (Caspary 1994).

One time, however, when the mistress of the house thought to surprise a boarder with an ethnic treat, her gesture backfired. A Mrs. Johnson prepared *lutefisk*, a traditional Scandinavian Christmas dish but definitely an acquired taste, for her Norwegian boarder, Mr. Christensen. He, however, had never acquired that particular taste, so as soon as he realized what was cooking, he arranged to be needed elsewhere (Christensen 1994).

Equally conscious of the importance of good food in the boardinghouses were mining company managers. In the face of labor shortages, Quincy policy extended to the kitchens of its boarding-houses, suggesting that keepers "'cater to the individual tastes [of the boarders] as much as possible'" (McNear 1983: 527). At Freda, one of the boarders did not care for something he had been served, so he complained to company management. Mr. Durocher, as boarding boss, was immediately notified and told to be sure the boarders were kept happy by the kitchen (Guilbault 1994).

The later phase of company paternalism included attention to workers' diet, kitchen practices, hygiene, etc. Nationally, reformers stressed health and nutrition through diet, though there was as yet no knowledge of vitamins, and nutrition studies were dangerously inadequate. Standardized cook books began

to promote the new ideals, which stressed economy and American (as opposed to ethnic) fare under the guise of "science" and industrial efficiency. The title of one such book, published about 1908, illustrates the trend: *Queen of the Household: The Standard Domestic Science Cook Book: A New and Original System of Classification, Fifteen Hundred Famous Recipes Suited to Homes, Hotels, Restaurants, Boarding Houses, Picnics and Entertainments. . . .*

One additional dimension of the food reformers' message met with strong repudiation from early labor leaders, however. Working among the urban (primarily immigrant) poor of New England but promoting its message to the national working-class, one reform group led by Edward Atkinson stressed the importance of eating cheaply, suggesting that to do so would eliminate labor's need for wage increases. Arguing that Atkinson was really more interested in driving down workers' wages than in raising their standard of living, Eugene Debs railed against what he charged was Atkinson's plan to degrade American workingmen, "'scientifically or otherwise.'" These "reforms" failed, according to Harvey Levenstein (1980: 384), because they neglected to realize the "psychological role of food" among America's working-class as "major reward of hard work. . . ." Ethnicity expressed through food in immigrant enclaves, particularly on the cosmopolitan frontier where ties to the home country were so strong, provided another block to reformers' efforts.

An appraisal of Upper Peninsula kitchens expressed through the moralistic industrial metaphor of the time (1915) appeared in the *Keweenaw News*. It illustrates the centrality of the kitchen to the popular conception of the home, and by extension, the importance of the dining room, mealtime, and the "domestic engineer" responsible for those meals to the notion of home in a boarding-house.

> [The Upper Peninsula kitchen] is the workshop in which thousands of dollars [sic] worth of material, more or less raw, is made into a manufactured product which goes directly into thousands of mouths and sustains thousands of human brains and bodies. Upon the quality of this manufactured product depends the welfare of society. Good food makes happy homes, keeps families united, accomplishes wonders in keeping men from drink and children from breaking down under the stress of modern education. Upon it hangs the issue of life or death. The kitchen, then, should need no advocate and no defender. It is the most important room in the house. (Frimodig 1983: 107)

Meal preparation comprised only part of the kitchen's function, however. Picking and canning hundreds of quarts of fresh fruits and vegetables, animal-tending, butchering, gardening, and even wood chopping and water carrying all were food-related chores necessary to operating the boardinghouse kitchen and keeping those boarders content. Additional kitchen activity included laundry and even Saturday night baths. Therefore kitchen work not only constituted a major portion of the boardinghouse keeper's responsibility, it was tied closely to other aspects of housekeeping.

Housekeeping

Preparing meals and clearing up required many hours of a boardinghouse manager's day, which frequently began at 4 A. M. with bread-baking and the double meal preparation of breakfast and packed lunches. Mary Erickson, a Swedish kitchen-worker at the K. C. Boardinghouse in Menominee in the early 1880s, rose at 3 A. M. daily to ready meals for two hundred men (City of Menominee 1983: 176). A second shift of workers also meant much more work for the kitchen staff, who consequently had two batches of lunch pails to fill and a fourth main meal to serve at midnight.

Chore schedules were necessarily tight, and mealtimes especially demanded punctuality. Therefore, anything that interfered with the meal schedule was potentially disastrous, even if essentially humorous. One such incident,

recalled through the generations of the Cordes family in Menominee, involved Pauline Cordes and her youngest daughter Ernestine, then three years old. Pauline relied upon the family and a hired girl to assist her operating the Bay View House for up to ninety boarders, but on one particular day as Pauline was preparing the noon meal, the only other person around was Ernestine. Pauline went to the cellar for supplies and while she was downstairs her small daughter flipped the latch on the cellar door, trapping her mother.

Pauline was frantic. Not only could the unsupervised child endanger herself (she nearly drowned a year later by falling head first into the rain barrel), but the boarders would soon stampede in for their noon meal. With only a twenty-minute meal break from the smelter, the men had no time to waste. Trying not to let her mounting distress show in her voice and frighten the child, Pauline entreated Ernestine for half an hour to lift the hook on the door before the child finally complied. Meanwhile, says Pauline's granddaughter, "grandma was getting gray about the approaching dinner hour" (Knuth 1993).

Laundry was another labor-intensive chore for the boarding-house staff. Bed linens were changed perhaps once per week, though standards in this area were sometimes lax. Even so, washing sheets for a dozen or perhaps scores of beds was no easy matter. Electricity and mechanical washing machines appeared infrequently and very late during the boardinghouse era. Even assuming an in-house pump for the water, it still had to be lugged to large copper boilers on the stove or over a fire in the yard, and then the bed clothes scrubbed, rinsed, wrung, and hung to dry (which might take days depending upon weather conditions).

The same process was, of course, necessary for the personal laundry of the boardinghouse family, as well as that of the boarders if this service was available. Worst of all were the ore-caked work clothes of the miners.

General cleaning, maintaining lighting fixtures, hauling fuel, building and maintaining cooking and heating fires, patching bed linens, and numerous other chores kept the boardinghouse staff busy. For example, June Brunet's work schedule at the Lake Linden Hotel and Boardinghouse shows she was chambermaid, cook, waitress, dishwasher and scullery maid:

5:00 A. M.	Help to get breakfast & pack fourteen lunch pails for C&H boarders, remembering individual tastes and catering to them.
7:00	Serve breakfast.
8:00	Clean kitchen & wash all the dishes.
9:30	Change beds, clean bathroom, etc.
11:00	Help get dinner.
12:00 P. M.	Serve dinner.
1:30	Clean tables, clean kitchen & wash all the dishes.
3:00-4:00	"Off" [Actually June had to run home then to prepare a hot supper for her grandfather, father, and two brothers. Her mother was dead, so as the only female of the family, cooking was her responsibility.] Return to work.
4:00	Help to prepare supper.
6:00	Serve supper.
7:30	Clean kitchen, wash dishes & pans, sweep, etc.
9:00 P. M.	Finished at her job, she would return home to do whatever clean-up, mending, and other chores were required, and then be up by 4 A. M. next day to do it all again.

She was also a messenger: periodically Western Union Telegraph messages were phoned to the hotel. She would receive the calls, take down the messages, and then either pass them on by phone or have to personally deliver them to the recipient's home (Brunet 1993).

In some households sawdust was spread on the dining room floor to absorb dirt and spilled food, then swept away and replaced with fresh every week. Boarders occasionally helped with chores such as gardening and wood chopping, voluntarily in many cases. Henry Hobart, however, groused in his

diary that despite the presence of two sons in the household, it was he who had to keep the wood box filled (Mason 1991).

All these many chores were necessary even when things went smoothly. Domestic disasters of one sort or another, however, could wipe out a day or more's labor. Olive Harlow recorded one such disaster in her diary: the stove collapsed onto the floor "'covering it with one homogenous mass of flat irons, veal soup, wheat bread dough, boiled potatoes, pudding and dishwater.'" Only Olive's young daughter found the incident amusing (Lil 1992: 22).

Despite conscientious housekeeping, bedbugs remained a continual problem. Hobart records having captured a pint of them (Mason 1991). In Hermansville, a company document of May 9, 1881, notes "'. . . it will be necessary to plaster the Boarding House to make it possible for men to live there. That ceiling is just alive with bedbugs and no live man can stand it'" (Worth 1978: 32). June Brunet (1993) reported that the Lake Linden boardinghouse where she worked was so infested with bedbugs she could "smell them."

Overall, boardinghouse managers apparently strove to maintain the prevailing standards of cleanliness. Thus the occasional glaring exception is noteworthy among its occupants. John Longyear and one of his surveying crew, needing over-night accommodation at Central Mine Location before taking the morning stage, reported that they secured a bed at

> a boardinghouse occupied by Hollanders, who took us in. This house did not live up to the old phrase, "as clean as the Dutch," for it was probably the most filthy human habitation I have ever been in. However, we had no choice, and we slept in a bed which we knew enough not to examine at all. (Paul 1960: 48)

Services

Boardinghouses offered a variety of additional services, usually depending upon the time, talent, and willingness of the boardinghouse keeper. The

most usual of these services was personal laundry. Facilities for boarders' personal laundry varied considerably. Some men did their own laundry at the dry or found women who took in laundry at the location or in town. Commercial laundries eventually arose in many towns, often operated by Chinese laborers.

The worst laundry was the mining clothes, so dirty they stood up without a man in them, and "greasy" when wet. Rarely, it seems, were these items washed at the boardinghouses once professional laundries dotted the mining district to handle this onerous chore. Numerous boarders had their personal laundry done on the boardinghouse premises though perhaps with additional charge. Flossie Dani included laundry service for the twenty dollars per month she charged her boarders in Hermansville (Dani 1982). Ida Schmidt did her boarders' personal laundry at no extra charge unless they were courting. The fancy white shirts her boarders wore for their young ladies demanded extra care, for which they had to pay (Mather 1994).

Although companies provided medical services, medical treatment was another special service available in some private boardinghouses. Several boardinghouse keepers were practitioners of traditional medicine. They prepared treatments for coughs and fevers, treated injuries, and some practiced midwifery throughout the community. A traditional Italian cold remedy was wine with cinnamon (O'Neill and Opal 1982). "Grandma" Tassin dispensed her cough remedy at home and to neighbors (Manzoline and Tousignant 1982). Teresa Lucas not only cleaned and cooked for her boarders, she tended their ills. She was skilled in traditional healing methods and set broken bones, made poultices and tonics (Frimodig 1990: 75).

Troubled households

Just as in a more conventional family, a boarding-house "family" could be touched by illness, violence, or other tragedy. Mining companies provided

health care for their employees usually through designated dispensaries or hospitals built at their locations. In early Marquette, however, the Harlow home developed into the company boardinghouse and its hospital. "Commenced keeping the boarding-house," noted Olive in her diary on August 28, 1849. The top floor of the large addition to the family home (figure 13), on occasion functioning as a meeting hall for school classes and church services, was also the hospital. Olive noted on September 30 that they were so anxious to complete this facility that "Mr. Harlow shingled [the roof] by moonlight with the first boards from our new sawmill" (Harlow 1972).

Contending with health emergencies could require extraordinary measures, and it was in that capacity that a special boardinghouse, actually a pest house, came to be built by the Menominee Mining Company near Quinnesec in the fall of 1880.

Two men in one of the large company boardinghouses had developed smallpox, requiring both immediate attention to them and quarantine of all exposed to them. The mine carpenters pooled their efforts and in thirty-six hours had erected a house for the ill men and their nurse, a fellow miner who had survived the disease. The boarders who had been exposed were sent to other quarters some distance away for the duration of the incubation period. One of them became ill, but he was treated and he and the original two patients survived (Dulan 1973: 43).

The pest house on Swede Town Hill at Republic was remodeled in 1894 to handle typhoid fever patients (Mattson and others 1970: 17). In 1900 the old pest house of Hancock was re-activated to handle five cases of smallpox. The original patient had been hospitalized, but there infected four others (Monette 1982: 38). At Hermansville, one part of town was known as Pest House Location, since in each medical emergency a new house would be constructed, used for the

necessary duration, then reassigned as a family residence. A succession of major illnesses over some time resulted in a cluster of dwellings (Worth 1978: 12).

Mine accidents, typhoid, influenza, tuberculosis, and many other maladies were constant threats to the pioneers on Michigan's iron frontier, and it was a rare boardinghouse indeed that did not lose at least one boarder to these dangers.

Other dangers also lurked in the boardinghouses. The boarders themselves posed severe and mortal threat to each other and those around them. Fights and other violence were common, particularly when alcohol was involved. Bloody brawls that began with fists and hot words frequently escalated as knives, lumber, and anything else handy became potentially deadly weapons. Differences between two men could ultimately involve opposing mobs of supporters and culminate in massive destruction of property as well as loss of life. Sometimes the fight was over a woman, or spurred by ethnic differences or regional jealousies. Sometimes there was even less reason.

Roscoe C. Young, one of the surveyors and civil engineers in the early mining district, tells in his autobiography of Charlie, an English engineer who, when drunk (which was long and often), held "high carnival" with a gun in hand. At Charlie's home "the glass had all been shot out of every mirror, the locks were all broken off the doors, and there were bullet holes through the ceiling and everywhere." Charlie's wife and children and their boarders hid under a nearby bridge when he was on a tear (43).

Another of many examples of unprovoked violence in boarding-houses occurred in May, 1907, at an Italian establishment in Ironwood. Four men had turned in for the night while their restless roommate Luigi Palmeria went down to the kitchen. There he consumed most of a gallon of whiskey and then returned to the mens' bedroom. He woke one man with the demand, "Sing with

me, Tony." Tony awoke and sang for a few minutes, but not to Luigi's satisfaction, so Luigi killed him with a single blast from his double-barrel shotgun (Cox 1993: 29).
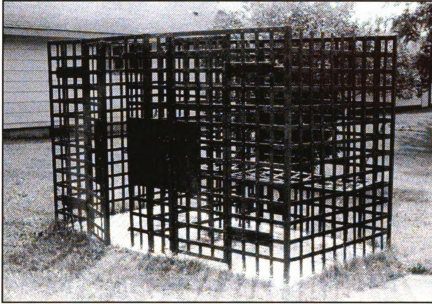
Figure 51. The lock-up at Rockland. (Photo by Ron Stofer)

Controlling lawbreakers was haphazard at best, especially in the early years of the mining frontier. Lawmen often had to transport prisoners many miles to jails or courts via canoe or stagecoach. The newspaper in early L'Anse noted that "'a jail, or lock-up, is badly needed here'" (Lambert 1971: 12). Rockland had a lock-up where the rowdy and violent were restrained (figure 51). In Ishpeming, the drunk and disorderly were sometimes jailed, but if they came under the jurisdiction of Herman Elson, a city police officer as well as manager of the Barnum House for CCI, they were likely to be taken back to the boardinghouse to sleep off their booze (Central 1976: 34).

Community violence also spilled over into boardinghouses, or it began there and spread. During the Copper Strike of 1913, two Croatian miners walking back to their boardinghouse in Seeberville cut across a small corner of

Figure 52. Putrich Croatian boardinghouse in Seeberville. (Courtesy Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, and Barry Pegg)

company land. For this act of trespassing, the local sheriff and a posse tracked them down, surrounded the house (figure 52), and set up a cross-fire through the windows. One woman and an infant escaped immediately, but the serving girl and two more children were pinned down inside for a time. Residents of the Italian boardinghouse next door could only look on in fear. Ultimately the women and children all escaped and were safe, but two boarders were killed and others, including the boarding boss, were wounded (Thurner 1984: 68-79).

Inter-ethnic brawls frequently began in a boardinghouse and later involved others in the region. Weddings were disrupted, card games escalated to street brawls, and boarders were waylaid on their way home.

Running a boardinghouse was risky when boarders turned violent. In 1901 in Iron Mountain, a boarder by the name of Jake reported for work one Friday and received his lay-off notice. He consumed several cans of beer and then went home where he picked a fight with the Widow Mary, who ran the boardinghouse. She had the poor sense to choose that moment to demand Jake's

board bill. He punched her; she ran to the summer kitchen, and he followed, grabbing a double-bladed ax along the way. With the ax he struck Mary several blows on the right side of her head, killing her, and then Jake threatened her son who had come to his mother's aid. Jake was sent to Ionia, judged criminally insane (Dulan 1978: 229-30).

No one was ever blamed, however, for a fire that destroyed the Bond and Clancy boardinghouse at the Colby Mine, Bessemer, on March 23, 1887. According to historian Larry Peterson, this fire of undetermined origin was the earliest recorded on the Gogebic Range "resulting in the greatest loss of human life." Only nine of the twenty-one men sleeping in the upstairs escaped the blaze, which broke out in the middle of the night. The boardinghouse keepers, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Miller, and the two serving girls escaped from their rooms downstairs after Mrs. Miller awoke and spread the alarm (Peterson, Bednar and Maurin 1993).

Fires destroyed numerous boardinghouses. One measure to save lives was a 1901 ordinance passed in Iron Mountain requiring a rope of one-half-inch diameter to be placed in every hotel and boarding-house sleeping room "of sufficient length to reach the ground" (Dulan 1978: 225).

Diversions

Clearly, both the boarders and those who ran the boardinghouses worked many long hours and the personal and community confrontations associated with boarding sometimes led to tragedy. Nevertheless, boardinghouse life was not without more benign diversion.

Card rooms seem to have been a feature of nearly every boardinghouse. Boardinghouses with parlor organs or pianos became the centers of pleasant evenings and festive occasions. Boarders played accordions or fiddles for

occasional dances. Much of the reported conversation among the boarders in Nicholls' (1968) account of the Cliffs Mine boardinghouse centered on their brass band. Music was an important part of many boarders' lives.

Ethnic folk songs could be enjoyed without fancy instruments or an "occasion." Work songs, drinking songs, love songs, songs of far-away homes, of joys and of loss gave expression to individual and group feelings. The final two verses of a traditional Finnish folk song, *The Wandering Boy*, popular in the northern Michigan boardinghouses (Larson 1993) convey some of the bitter-sweet emotions undoubtedly recognized by immigrants of whatever origin:

> A wandering boy saw on the roadside
> An opening flower of love;
> To gaze upon it, but never to own it
> Is promised the wandering boy.
>
> Who would lay away the wanderer
> When he falls into the roadside ditch
> No roses will bloom nor maidens weep
> At the grave of the wandering boy.

Swapping stories was a popular pastime, as was pondering deep philo-sophical questions. Politics, mine events, personalities, women, and numerous other topics drew attention, both serious and comical. Near-tragedies were remembered with laughter and passed on as "family tales." At one point in the history of Rockland, a Jerry O'Neill ran the boardinghouse in Irish Hollow. One day during his tenure, a blast from the mine shot a twenty-to-twenty-five-pound rock into the air. The projectile arched across the dam, sailed toward town, and crashed through the boardinghouse roof, landing on a bed that had just been vacated by one of the boarders! (Bebeau 1947, 1990: 10).

With so many of the boardinghouse residents separated from family and friends, confronting ethnic rivalry, working in dangerous occupations, and con-tending with other stressful conditions, emotions could fray and dispositions get ugly, particularly with the men living and working together so intensely.

Humor eased tensions and vented frustrations (almost) painlessly as it does in

many social contexts, but according to sociologist Ed Knop (1974: 5), it became

especially important to frontier development where in the "indefinite context of

a community undergoing formation," humor served to facilitate "(1) social con-

trol, (2) socialization, (3) release/diversion/ catharsis, and . . . provide a cover for

. . . (4) innovative behaviors or exploratory probing."

For example, a comical observation on the language differences between

the ethnic groups allowed the immigrants to laugh at themselves, to reinforce

stereotypical identity, and also to vent the generally-held resentment toward the

preferentially-treated Cornish:

> Big John, bleary-eyed and a bit unsteady, says to his companion, "Funny
> ting . . . I cannot unnderstan. You know, ta Italian come in ta America,
> take long time ta talk ta English . . ." he pauses, " . . . ta Svedes come ta
> America, six months he still say 'god dag'" . . . funny ting, I don see vy,
> the cousin yaks come over here, tay vas learn ta talk English right avay!"
> (Dulan 1978: 141)

Greenhorns were popular targets for frontier humor (Knop 1974), and so

were the pompous, as the incident of the "boarding boss" lunchpail (above)

attests. However, from the analysis of Thomas Clancey (1926: 253), a student of

the humor among the early Michigan iron foundrymen, "the principle adopted

by the fun lovers was the greatest laugh for the greatest number, regardless of

the victim." Edwin Henwood's recollections of early miners' shenanigans con-

firm Clancey's contention that drawing upon situations at hand, they discovered

that "the practical joke, much fallen into disfavor, was a ready vehicle for the

local wit."

Numerous plots, eventually enacted on the job or elsewhere within com-

munity view, were sometimes hatched in boardinghouse sitting rooms.

Boarders' pranks closer to home ranged from the silly to the truly creative and

fellow boarders or even the house staff could be their victims.

Minnie Johnson of Foster City housed six or seven boarders in the large upstairs of her home. She had live-in help from one young woman. On one occasion the boarders conspired against the servant-girl, convincing her that they had x-ray vision and could see through the walls of her bedroom. To further hassle the lady, the pranksters attached one end of a thin string to her bed covers and ran the string through a tiny hole in the wall. After she had settled down for the night, they tugged at the string from the adjoining room, causing her quite a fright (Johnson 1987:130).

Sometimes the source of a good scare, or a good laugh, was quite unintentional. Wintry gusts and the superstitions of some Allouez miners proved their own undoing. Mondays were always wash days and laundry was hung outside, no matter how cold the weather. Often it would freeze solid on the line. One Monday night as a group of miners ended their late shift and trudged toward home, they were accosted by a dancing wraith, arms flailing, who caught each up momentarily in her cold embrace before they ran, terrified, for home. The "ghost," however, had been nothing more than a long, white, frozen nightgown, a wind-blown refugee from a neighbor's clothesline (Monette 1994: 10).

Boardinghouse residents pursued additional forms of diversion, as popularity or availability allowed. Outdoor recreation included walks to town, softball and baseball games, picnics, hunting and fishing, and helping in the boardinghouse garden. Italians popularized boccie ball tournaments. Tamarack Location had a designated field for cricket, popular among the Cornish. The Cornish also practiced their own form of wrestling, and tournaments drew many participants and spectators.

Indoor recreation or relaxation took many forms. Bowling alleys were built in several towns and locations after the turn of the century. Finns, particularly, enjoyed saunas which were available in many communities, especially at

the Finnish boardinghouses. The ritual of cleansing and relaxing was usually climaxed with a social hour that included conversation, cake, and strong coffee. Opera houses, movie theatres, community halls, and religious centers also provided opportunities for socializing—and for the single boarders, venues for courting.

Neighborhood saloons, with or without boarding facilities, drew considerable trade, though where alcohol was prohibited, boardinghouses became even more important as social centers for card playing, business transactions, political venting, and venues of male bonding—traditional social services of the saloon (Englemann 1977, West 1979).

Education, too, was a popular after-work activity for some miners. For example, in 1907, the Mohawk school began offering night classes for adults three nights a week in arithmetic and literacy skills. The classes proved so popular, men working the evening shift at the mine changed their work schedule so they could attend school. Additional subjects were taught on demand, faculty at the school expanded, and the classrooms were electrified for better lighting. Not long after this night program began, the old school building was replaced by a newer and larger facility. The old school was then converted into a boardinghouse (Monette 1980: 5,7).

Holiday celebrations varied widely through time across the mining districts of northern Michigan. July Fourth appears to have been the most consistently celebrated holiday, with company-sponsored activities, community parades, and so forth. Enclaves of Italians organized Columbus Day parades and celebrations; the Irish did the same for St. Patrick's Day. The English commemorated St. George's Day and the Scots recognized both St. Andrew's Day and the birth of poet Robert Burns. French-Canadians kept an old Norman custom alive in the observance of Mid-summer Day, St. Jean's Day. Norwegians

celebrated the independence day of Norway, and the Poles marked the anniversary of Poland's constitution. Local clubs and social organizations added their own public festivities to the annual celebratory calendar (Thurner 1974: 32-34).

Christmas was observed with religious services in some places, but in others it was "just another work day." The Harlows' first Christmas at Marquette (1849) was fairly quiet. Olive's diary records simple gift-giving to two people who had helped run the boarding-house and a "baked stuffed trout and plum pudding" for Christmas Eve supper. The following day, "four of our men took the span of black horses and went to the Jackson Location where they fiddled and danced . . ." (Harlow 1972).

Schoolmaster Henry Hobart shows mixed feelings about the Christmas celebration at Clifton in 1863. Work and school were suspended for the week between Christmas and New Year's. He reports that the church service and the community tree were pleasing, but he was disgusted that the miners perverted the traditional caroling into "singing for beer." Alcohol was not banned in his location for the holiday: so many over-indulged in their drunken spree that they needed the rest of the week to sober up (Mason 1991: 242-244).

Boardinghouses were occasionally the site of Christmas pageants performed by community children. Very late in the boardinghouse era, there is one account of a boardinghouse family that celebrated Christmas with its boarders, involving them in the preparations and special treats, although no gifts were exchanged between boarders and host family (Mather 1994).

Actually, the exchanges between members of a boarding household were more complex than mere gifts. The emotions ran the full range, and physical reactions ranged from tending the ill and giving economic support, to violent attack. As with any family, there were moments of great joy and of great sadness, all a part of living and sharing life under one roof.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The Michigan Mining Frontier

Michigan's mining region of the Upper Peninsula operated as a cosmopolitan frontier according to Steffen's and Hardesty's models. Even the abortive French and British endeavors at copper mining support the cosmopolitan frontier model, since neither group could compensate for transportation and technological shortcomings. Necessarily dependent upon the natural resources, development of the region relied on transportation, technology, and adequate labor forces to exploit those resources. Yet even with these factors in place by the mid-nineteenth century, national and international conditions affected the metals markets. Thus the mining frontier was closely tied to outside financiers and politics, and threatened by ore discoveries elsewhere. Boom and bust cycles stimulated new development while closing down marginal operations.

Settlement types conform to Lewis' modified gradient. Camp placement (extraction or processing sites with residences, usually locations) was resource-dependent: mine sites developing where iron or copper was abundant and accessible; smelting and mill sites growing up near flowing water, limestone, and charcoal for the processing and near ports or rail centers to ship the product. Supply sites (more complex locations, company towns, or private townsites) sat as hubs to numerous surrounding locations. The few entrepots became foci of the dendritic land and water routes linking the financial and market centers of

265

the nation and beyond with the most remote periphery of the mining complex. Boarding occurred in each settlement type.

<p align="center">Boarding Laborers on the Frontier</p>

Boarding had been an American housing option since colonial days and by the nineteenth century it had found favor among all levels of American society. Urban examples under private ownership catered to the genteel or served the working-class, often specific occupational groups. Urban and company town facilities under corporate control housed hordes of factory, mill, and mine workers.

Frontier examples demonstrate the adaptive features of the institution. Emphasis fell on utilitarian company-built houses as mining companies were forced to provide housing at the wilderness mine sites and their allied lumbering locations. Boarding additional individuals in family homes built by the companies maintained company control over these workers, but shifted their accommodation into structures with a higher socio-economic "payback" from the company perspective. Soon managers realized the manipulative power they had over employees through company-provided housing and company-controlled land. Boarding became an important tool of company management.

Commercial houses and privately-owned homes that took boarders also aimed to provide occupational residences rather than the posh surroundings of the East Coast urban boardinghouses for the genteel. This does not mean that the commercial houses or even some of the private residences lacked the refinements of Belgian carpets, Victorian furnishings, and modern conveniences of their time. Nevertheless, the boarding facilities on the Michigan mining frontier served the working population, a largely single male population.

Depending upon time and circumstance, boarding facilities exhibited a

wide range of form, style, and fitting-out. One significant circumstance that dictated materials, style, size, placement, and even occupants of particular houses was company policy and prevailing notions of status. Mining settlements, particularly locations but towns as well, were socially ranked societies. That ranking was reflected in and reinforced structurally through the built environment. The pecking order placed native-born over foreign-born, and of the foreign-born, Cornishmen over the others. Occupations were similarly ranked and often interlinked with ethnicity. Size and style of dwelling, materials of construction, color, refinements such as porches and plastered privies, and sometimes placement in relation to other mine buildings signalled the relative status of the designated occupant and his family—and boarders. Among those boarding could be found individuals from the lowliest ethnic and occupational levels up through the professions—company engineers, the doctor, and others, though these latter often eventually had individual company housing provided for them.

However, boarding does not seem to have been a popular option of the mining or lumbering elite. Instead, they enjoyed lavish (and usually company-built) single-family housing that physically and symbolically designated and reinforced their status and authority. Whereas in Boston a pampered young couple might enjoy social status from boarding and avoiding the inconveniences of home maintenance, on the Michigan mining frontier (particularly in the locations) relatively few people had their own homes. For the laborers, access to a company rental home signalled occupational status. For many on the frontier, home ownership was a goal not easily or ever realized. Thus for the company elite such as the supervisors who could afford to build their own mansion or were supplied with one at company expense, occupying the "big house on the hill" rather than boarding—even in the poshest circumstances—was important to solidifying company structure and demonstrating company values.

Like other regions of the country and elsewhere in the world, boarding served a specific housing need in a society that required numbers of workers in close proximity to industrial sites where lack of transportation and other support services made commuting impossible or impractical and other housing options were unavailable. It also provided for a largely dispensable labor force when conditions no longer supported a need for the workers.

The mining companies built, moved, or dismantled their boardinghouses subject to market and local conditions: boarding laborers and the company structures in which they resided could be a transient lot. Therefore, boarding in general but particularly on the mining frontier was a contradictory existence, in some ways suggestive of the permanence and social closeness of "home" and "family," yet underlain with the reality of impermanence and disconnectedness.

Much as the companies begrudgingly needed the "rolling stones," those transient workers who provided flexibility to the work force, they soon emphasized married men with resident families in their housing programs, consciously eliminating company boarding-houses in all but the most compelling circumstances. They could curtail their own boardinghouse program and yet depend upon the availability of boarding to serve the transient labor through the private sector, where commercial boardinghouses and boarding space in individual homes were available. If sufficient space was lacking voluntarily, or if companies wanted to keep closer control over the boarding employees, managers could mandate additional boarding space in the company houses rented by their employees.

The Boarding Experience

The boarding experience was, however, more than the simple sharing of bed and board under the same roof with strangers for a price. Nor was it merely a company convenience. Boarders benefitted from the arrangement in that they

had inexpensive housing offering many of the services of "home" without the responsibilities and domestic chores nor the capital investment. The relatively low cost of boarding allowed individuals who had migrated to the region to send remittances to family or to finance their voyages to America.

The economic opportunities associated with operating boardinghouses were also significant. A strong element in the urban domestic economy nationally, boardinghouse operation was a major source of income for women on the frontier. The Michigan mining frontier provided the opportunity for women to combine farm and urban domestic economic strategies through their boardinghouses to support themselves and their families, and as a second income, boardinghouse earnings at the very least helped sustain mining families through the "bust" phases of the mining cycles. Additionally, from their boardinghouse income, some of these women were able to purchase family homes, just as studies show was done by working-class families in Chicago and Pennsylvania.

Moreover, boardinghouses became a pull factor in female migration to the mining regions. Operating a boardinghouse or rendering domestic service in one was perceived as a socially respectable occupation for women even by ethnic groups that discouraged women working outside the home. Therefore, boardinghouse mistresses and jobs in their houses figured as key links in female chain migration. These women's presence as eventual marriage partners led to further regional development, including their homes as additional boardinghouses.

Company goals were also satisfied by these factors of frontier boarding. Women's boardinghouse earnings mitigated the possible loss of experienced miners between "boom" periods and relieved the companies of dependent widows. While home ownership removed an employee from more direct control by the company, it potentially strengthened his loyalty to community and company and potentially fostered middle-class identification. Greater availability of

women promoted more married employees and an expanding, stable core of the labor force.

Both company and private sector boardinghouses served as minimal venues for Americanization of immigrant boarders by bringing them together with other boarders or the host family who could help them learn English, help them find a job, assist them through the immigration process, and so forth. However, either because of company priorities or inclination of boarders themselves, many boardinghouses became ethnic havens, separating along ethnic lines and promoting and preserving that ethnicity. Defining ethnicity involved more than country of origin: regional, political, and religious affiliation were also significant. Maintaining strong ties to the home culture is consistent with the cosmopolitan frontier model, and the surrogate family home for the boarders in their new land (the "colonizing unit") was the reasonable center for expression of those ties. Language, food, music and literature, religion, celebrations and games, and even spatial use emphasized those ethnic cultural identities.

As part of the cultural landscape, boardinghouses were the physical venues for social and cultural exchange. As a dwelling, the boardinghouse became "home" for those residents who developed lines of mutual interest and affection. Boarders and hosts developed surrogate family roles for mutual aid. Boarders' interaction, whether face-to-face conversation after dinner or surreptitiously through pranks and practical jokes, allowed them to test reactions and develop rules for social co-existence. Boardinghouses hosted plays and church services, school lessons, and political meetings. They were where many romances began and where some of the subsequent weddings were held. They were the sites of the most intimate, and at times the most violent and horrendous, human actions.

The material culture of the boardinghouses illustrates the conflict between

the companies' promotion of Americanization and the immigrants' predilection to maintain home culture. Physically, many of the boardinghouses (especially those built by companies from engineers' and architects' designs) reinforced American middle-class notions of privacy, nuclear family structure, styles and values. The residents, however, occasionally re-defined spatial use and persisted with furnishing styles according to their old-world cultural priorities. They attached their own meanings to spatial division and furnishings.

Much of the boarding experience for people on the Michigan mining ranges was similar to the experience of others of similar economic and social class in other regions of the country and globally in such nations as England and Canada. However, the Great Lakes mining region did spawn a unique "cultural species." The co-operative boardinghouses among some of the Finns showed local success in that they were an expression of a value deeply held: collective work habits combined with Socialist sympathies had intensified, particularly when pitted against the paternalistic policies of the mining companies. Elsewhere in the country where labor policies differed and the Finns' politics were less radical, the co-operative format failed to take hold.

Part and parcel of this failure is the suggestion that a woman works best in her own kitchen. Although a number of men operated the boardinghouses on the Michigan mining ranges, the female figure was an important focus for the success of the house and the contentment of the boarders. The idealization of the domestic role through the nineteenth century, plus the generally understood function of the boardinghouse as a surrogate family, forced the traditional nurturing and "civilizing" roles onto the woman of the boardinghouse. In real life, when she failed, she lost boarders. In popular culture, she became the serpent-tongued Mrs. Hoople.

A hired-in "house mother," despite the title, seems not to have taken the

personal interest in the boarders they would expect from a surrogate mother. That lack of interest in the boarders, rather than necessarily in the kitchen, may be the central problem with the co-operative houses. Or, perhaps, the lack of attachment to the kitchen was interpreted as lack of interest in the men—"mother" never fully realizing her literal role as nourisher of the "family."

Whether the boardinghouse mistress or the boarding boss did the cooking, food was of primary importance to boardinghouse life. It sustained the body, but often also reflected ethnicity, linking household residents through culture who were not linked through kinship. Specifically ethnic foodways, such as the Cornish pasty, became part of a culinary cultural exchange, though expressed as a modal change. In addition, food provided a bridge of interaction between household members, even in boardinghouses, and between households. Boarders sometimes assisted with the kitchen garden and helped tend the animals. Co-operative food preparation, such as wine production, brought together members of many households, including boardinghouses, in a joint community effort. On the other hand, Americanization was facilitated through kitchens that turned out generally American fare.

The Michigan mining frontier that spawned those boarding-houses is gone. The mining era and the boardinghouse era went into decline simultaneously and coincidentally. Yet during those decades of transformation when so many people from so many places flooded into the area, both the institution and the physical boardinghouse were there to shelter them from loneliness and abrupt "culture shock" as well as from the harsh climate. While not an actual family, a boarding household exhibited much the same personal involvement and, in many cases at least, some of the same nurturing-while-pushing-one-out-of-the-nest process that goes on in any family.

Summary

As predicted by cosmopolitan frontier models, the mining companies of Michigan's western U.P. mineral region dominated its development, using company-built housing on company-controlled land to manipulate the labor force. This housing was provided in large company boardinghouses and hundreds of family homes available for nominal rent to employees where additional boarding space was available. Privately-owned commercial boardinghouses and boarding room in privately-owned homes also became available, though not generally at the mine sites.

Between 1840 and 1920 boarding was a common practice across the country for people of all economic and social levels. Urban boarding often catered to the genteel, including couples who wished to avoid the complications of home ownership and management. On the frontier, boarding was a popular option for the working class. The mining elite were given or built elegant family homes denoting their economic and social position in what was a highly ranked society. In a similar fashion, housing for married employees took preference over company boardinghouses, built for single men.

The big company boardinghouses were a part of the necessary start-up overhead, in most cases eliminated as quickly as possible. In the private sector, however, and for those renting company houses and taking in boarders, boarding income was significant to the frontier economy in two particular ways: 1) it helped stabilize the male labor force by providing households with economic bridges between "booms" in the boom/bust cycles of mining, and 2) it provided women with significant earning power in a socially acceptable endeavor where few similar options existed.

Three factors seem to have been most responsible for shaping the boarding experience on the Michigan mining frontier: company policy, ethnicity, and

the boardinghouse mistress. Companies built most of the initial boardinghouses and communities and determined who could live in them. They played one ethnic group—often manifest as one occupational status—against another. The cosmopolitan frontier kept close ties to "home" territory: company personnel to the urban-based stockholders who shaped policy about regions they had never visited and did not understand; the workers to other regions of the nation and Old World communities.

Ethnically-defined boardinghouses and those accommodating numerous ethnic identities each assisted the residents' Americanization. Ethnically-specific houses, however, provided a focus for the inevitable expressions of ethnicity that would arise on a cosmopolitan frontier, extending the surrogate family function of the boardinghouse into another dimension and providing a physical and social bastion against ethnic rivalries in frontier communities.

The boardinghouse mistresses set the rules and the atmosphere for the boardinghouses. They were the "mother-wife-sister" figure working within a number of circles of cultural expectation. An important link in female chain migration, they brought women to the frontier, employed them, and facilitated their marriages, thereby expanding and helping develop the region.

The roles served by boardinghouses on the Michigan mining frontier were several and complex. For the companies, they were disposable tools to build and manipulate a work force. For boarding-house managers, they were a source of income and what freedoms and opportunities that income provided. They were also a place of employment for additional staff, often the first job in America for numerous immigrant women. The Finnish co-operative boardinghouses, a form unique to the Great Lakes mining region, allowed a cultural and political expression through economic enterprise, while also serving the basic purpose of the boardinghouse.

As part of the cultural landscape, boardinghouses accommodated community social, religious, and political occasions. Architecturally varied in form and size, many seem to have been consciously designed to reflect (and instill) American middle-class values, though strong ethnic- and class-based notions of living patterns sometimes conflicted with the built environment.

To varying degree, boardinghouses on the Michigan mining frontier—like those elsewhere—housed surrogate families. As such, these boarding households allowed the residents, especially the immigrants, to explore the unfamiliar social dynamic of the frontier communities, to form personal bonds, and to give and receive assistance.

The boardinghouse, often literally the first structure at a mine site, was indeed the "colonizing unit" on the mining frontier. Its presence and usually even its design reflected the "home country"—American financiers' cultural and economic priorities. The residents, representing dozens of ethnic identities, maintained much of their cultural baggage while adjusting to both the physical and social conditions of the region. Adaptation became a key to survival, but only so far as was necessary to get the job done. Companies built and then phased-out their big boardinghouses as soon as they could shift the responsibility of boarding onto other' shoulders, only to renew the cycle in another location or when other factors forced it. The physical houses came and went, but the institution of boarding remained so long as it served its felt need.

EPILOGUE

During the 1960s, Americans seemed to accept conceptually, if not literal-
ly, "a gas station on every corner." A generation later, in the wake of gasoline
shortages and oil embargoes, the proliferation of gas stations had slowed consid-
erably, and many were bulldozed or transformed for other commercial uses or
merely abandoned. Like the old gas stations, boardinghouses of northern
Michigan's mining region, once so numerous, are no longer a ubiquitous feature
of the built environment. Many are gone entirely, burned or dismantled,
although of those, a number found alternative use before their end. Some, how-
ever, still stand, a few even continuing a useful existence.   Although there
were numerous specific variables in the fates of these buildings, three forms of
disposition frequently occurred, either singly or in combination. When the
emphasis was placed on the structure as a collection of building materials, it was
moved or dismantled and reassembled for reuse. If it was perceived primarily as
housing, the boardinghouse was altered to continue to serve that function in a
new social context. Thirdly, there has been some recent recognition of these
structures as tangible evidence of the social institution and the historical frontier
they served, and their reuse reflects that recognition.

Recycling of resources was an important feature decades ago, though
with a more economical than ecological motivation. Both the mining companies
and individuals were part of the recycling that involved the boardinghouses in
the U.P. mining districts. Companies converted outdated hospitals, schools, and
industrial buildings into dwellings. For example, the population of Phoenix

Location declined by over 80 percent due to the Panic of 1893, but a decade later the population and the demand for copper was on the rise. Part of a major refurbishing program of the Phoenix Mine buildings included remodeling one old warehouse into an eighteen-room boardinghouse (Monette 1989: 12).

Companies also transported and transformed buildings to new use. One example is Boardinghouse No. 1 at Hermansville. Originally, this building was a shingle mill in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. When in 1878 company owner C. J. L. Meyer began his hardwood flooring and charcoal-producing enterprise at Hermansville, he had the building dismantled and moved to Michigan to assume its new function. It was the first building in Hermansville. Due to its heavy infestation of bedbugs, the building was ordered to be plastered throughout. Fire destroyed it in the early morning of February 15, 1915 ([Worth] 1978).

Another story of boardinghouse transformation began in 1915 at Van's Harbor on the Garden Peninsula, Delta County. A large three-story boardinghouse that formerly housed employees of the local lumber mill was sold to a

Figure 53. Boardinghouse No. 1 at Hermansville, c. 1878. (Courtesy Delta County Historical Society)

store-owner for $175 and dismantled. The owner of the lumber used it to build the Rex Theatre next to his store in the town of Garden, not far from the abandoned Fayette townsite. This theatre served the town for forty years as the site for high school graduations, school and community plays, medicine shows, and movies.

In 1961 the building was transformed yet again. The store, the theatre, and a small building on the other side of the theatre were all taken over by a lumber supply business (*Our Heritage* 1982: 65, 154-55), a somewhat ironic conclusion for what had initially been a lumber mill boardinghouse.

This example also demonstrates the usual path of transmission of the mining area boardinghouses, from company ownership to private sector. Over the years as needs and company priorities fluctuated, dwellings were added or deleted accordingly. With the decline of the mining industry in Michigan during the 1920s and 30s, the companies divested themselves of hundreds of dwellings to decrease their overhead. Arrangements varied: buildings were sold to be relocated, to be dismantled, or to remain in place under private ownership (though the land under them was often not sold until decades later) (Cleveland Cliffs Iron Co. 1931, Monette 1985: 72, Monette 1980: 32). Thus it is likely that some old boardinghouses exist in new guises undetected or even unsuspected.

In January, 1923, Henry Baer, a prominent businessman and civic leader of Hancock, realized that the Copper Country had a resource it could export to the Iron Mountain region—houses. Expansion of Ford Motor Company in the Iron Mountain area had drawn workers from the declining copper mines. Baer knew that the houses these workers had left vacant—houses that undoubtedly had accommodated boarders at one time—could become an asset to Ford and simultaneously cease to be a liability to the mining companies. He arranged with Ford

"to move as many houses as possible" where they were most needed (Alexander 1984: 29).

In other cases, the boardinghouse history of a place is well known. For years the Barnum House, owned by CCI and managed by the Herman Elson family, had accommodated the Finns working at the Barnum Mine. In 1918, Elson moved to other quarters where he began a soft-drink bottling business (Central 1976, Old days 1981). CCI sold the Barnum House to a Mr. Conte as a private residence for his large family.

Figure 54. Barnum House/Conte residence in 1995. (Photo by author)

Since then, the building has been modified. The open porch shown in figure 23 has been enclosed (figure 54). The large interior has been subdivided into a duplex: the former kitchen, manager's apartment, and a portion of the upstairs now form a separate apartment. This modification necessitated some change in the main section of the house: what had been the spacious dining room for the boarders is now the owners' living room and the former smoking

parlor is a huge kitchen. Little else has changed. The house still sits on its original foundation near the western edge of Ishpeming. The Conte family still lives there—three of the daughters, at least. Two were little girls when their father bought the property in 1918; the third was born in the house later that year.

Figure 55. Laborers' boardinghouse at Spies Location, built 1909. (Photo by Ron Stofer)

The large Spies Boardinghouse built in 1909 by CCI is another example of a well-preserved boardinghouse that still serves as local housing. For about two decades the house accommodated boarding miners, but in the 1930s in response to boarder requests, CCI converted the structure to apartments. In its original configuration, there were ten bedrooms for boarders upstairs and the standard HPS features on the main floor. Outbuildings included privies and coal bins. In 1954 the house was sold to a Mrs. Joseph Grant who resides in one apartment and continues to rent the others (Bernhardt 1985: 64, Bernhardt 1981: 138).

CCI's Forbes Boardinghouse, a close contemporary of the Spies, was also converted to apartments. It burned in 1942. A third CCI house in the area, at the Homer location, was razed in 1925 (Bernhardt 1985: 64, *Mineral Hills* 1968: 3,4).

Figure 56. Victoria Hotel in the 1930s. (Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, and Robert Fast)

The long-lived Barnum and Spies houses seem to be the exception. Even in reuse, some of the large company houses went into rapid decline. The main company boardinghouse at Victoria in figure 7 appears physically unchanged in figure 56 above as the privately-owned Victoria Hotel, but much had changed in its operation. Activity at the mine ceased in the early 1920s; mining families had abandoned the site by 1923. Five years later the property was sold. The commercial hotel offered accommodations crude by earlier boardinghouse standards: cornhusk-filled mattresses and pillowcases changed once a season, going from white to black by summer's end. The building no longer stands.

Not only company boardinghouses were given new uses. The Metropolitan House was a two-story I-plan commercial boardinghouse with saloon built in Felch Township in the 1880s. By the 1910s the ground floor had been converted to a general store, and the second floor divided into apartments for the store employees. This Metropolitan Store served the community for many years before it ultimately closed (Blomquist 1978).

Anna and Candido Pisoni's boardinghouse remained a useful feature of the Mineral Hills area. Anna maintained the boardinghouse operation to 1958, long after the end of the "boardinghouse era." A year later the village purchased the building and surrounding land as a possible "back up" for the municipal buildings suspected to be in danger from caving ground. In 1960, however, the building was dismantled and its lumber used to construct a ski chalet that also serves as the Mineral Hills Hall on the village property (*Mineral Hills* 1968: 4, Bernhardt 1981: 138.).

Many of the boardinghouses have simply disappeared. Most in this study are long gone, and in only a few cases is the reason known. The structures at Princeton were sold off, dismantled or moved (Dozzi 1982, Cleveland Cliffs 1931). At Republic, Boardinghouse Road ends near a large overgrown foundation. No structure. At Fayette the hotel and several of the frame homes still stand, but the original boardinghouse burned and the cabins that held boarders are nothing but archaeological sites. The huge boarding complex at Wells was dismantled by the company (Bourke 1982), as was the Delta Chemical boardinghouse (Mather 1994). Even the Fellman home at Third and Ohio in Marquette is gone, the lot reassigned for parking to serve the small businesses encroaching on the residential areas beyond the main commercial district.

The house at Ewen, built about 1888 and photographed in abandoned disrepair in 1954 (figure 25), has long since collapsed.

Also abandoned, the house at the Bonnie Location was still standing in 1994 (shown in figure 57) but much deteriorated from its former condition (figure 22). A contracting firm using the mine's dry and some of the surrounding land for its construction vehicles apparently saw no value in the structure: it was posted against trespassers and left to slowly decay. The Bonnie was recently razed.
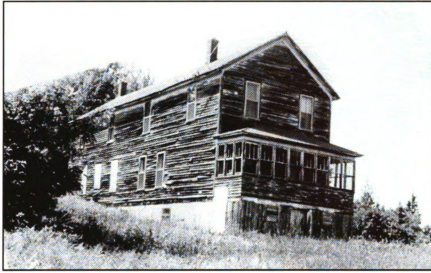
Figure 57. Bonnie Location boardinghouse in 1994. (Photo by Ron Stofer)

On the other hand, in a few cases old boardinghouses have been assigned social value and identified for the public as tangible documents of the past. Although the workers' cabins and the boardinghouse are physically gone from Fayette, interpretive signs and commentary during horse-drawn carriage tours of the townsite remind visitors of the physical and social place boarding occupied in the community.

As mentioned above, the cabins of the lower location at the Victoria Mine are being restored by a local historical group, the Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria. The boarding aspect of the site is being highlighted, here again reminding visitors of the presence and important of the institution on the mining frontier.

One of thirteen buildings in the designated Historic Business District in Amasa is the Blomquist Boardinghouse, built about 1892 (figure 58). The house served boarders "through the 1930s" (Bernhardt 1985: 41). Since then, various merchants have used the first floor of the building. Currently, however, it appears abandoned, with more threat from neglect than promise of preservation.

Figure 58. Boardinghouse in Amasa's Historic District. (Photo by author)

Figure 59. Baltic Mine boardinghouse built by Mose Charles. (Courtesy Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, and Clara Gourd)

Perhaps the most positive reuse of an old mining boardinghouse in both residential and social terms occurred to the Charles House, also known as the Baltic Hotel (figure 59). Operators of the Baltic Mine built several boardinghouses and numerous single-family houses at their location between 1898 and 1902, but in 1905 Mose Charles purchased a lot on a scenic hill and built his own boardinghouse. The facility featured a "large basement with an indoor toilet, . . . spacious living area on the first floor," and at least twelve bedrooms. In 1928 when the Baltic Mine shut down, the company dismantled its location buildings (Monette 1996: 30). The privately-owned Baltic Hotel, therefore, remains as the sole survivor of the big boardinghouses in the area.

Over the years, the house changed hands a couple of times, the Kangas family purchasing it in 1948 and then the Olson-Hunters in 1992. Under Kangas ownership, the east wing with kitchen downstairs and bedrooms up was removed and the lumber used to build a garage at another family-member's home, linking the Baltic to those other boardinghouses that were dismantled and rebuilt elsewhere. The Olson-Hunters, on the other hand, are restoring and preserving the house both physically and functionally.

They purchased the property with a five-year plan in mind, to convert the old boardinghouse into a Bed and Breakfast—what is perhaps the closest modern parallel to the original boardinghouse concept (Monette 1996: 30-31, Caspary 1994). Soon after they began renovation, however, they had the opportunity to return the house to its original use, so two years ago the old Mose Charles house again became a boardinghouse. Just as in the original boardinghouse era, boarders have come from various parts of the globe, currently including Germany, Mexico, and Australia.

Besides making the house their residence and a commercial establishment, the Olson-Hunters are attempting to preserve or restore much of the

house's original details while modernizing plumbing and electrical service. Among their more ambitious future goals are to rebuild the lost east wing and to remove the 1950s chrome and tile kitchen that was perpetrated on the former men's smoking parlor. With various artifacts of the region and some of the original Charles family furnishings they plan to highlight the history of the mining region by reflecting a different period or theme in each room.

Noting the fate of some of the boardinghouses in this study seemed an appropriate way to conclude the project. There is no pretense that the information in this epilogue demonstrates some profound trend in American architectural history, nor can it be construed as meaningful statistically. There is simply not enough data on the old boardinghouses to even know how many there were and where and when they all operated, let alone what happened to each.

Nevertheless, the boardinghouses were intrinsic to the physical, economic, and social landscape of the northern Michigan mining districts in their time. Their purposeful physical rejection through company policy (sales and/or demolition) was a logical next step once management had rejected the company-based institution and emphasized married employees and family housing. The structures' intrinsic worth as building materials and practical value as homes or stores brought or kept some of them functioning within the private sector. Finally, recognition of the historic value of the boardinghouses as a tangible reminder of the mining frontier is evidence of the same public impulse that has put books celebrating small town main streets onto the coffee tables of suburban homes and a facsimile drive-in movie theatre into the Henry Ford Museum.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

A SAMPLING OF BOARDINGHOUSE RECIPES—
THAT LITTLE "TASTE OF HOME"

The following recipes come from a number of sources. Each food item is mentioned in the records or by the descendants of those who operated boarding-houses in the Michigan mining districts. Wherever possible, the actual recipe from the boardinghouse has been used. Many of these recipes were handed down through generations. A few recipes (receipts) were ultimately published in local cook books compiled by church or community organizations. Others were located in commercial cook books aimed at boardinghouse operators and are presented as representative of the dish, not necessarily as the specific recipe used by a particular Michigan boardinghouse.

Traditional recipes, and even some of the published ones, retain the flavor of hands-on demonstration and idiosyncratic kitchen facilities through their imprecise measurements and their lack of standardized baking directions.

Cinnamon rolls

Take 1 quart flour, 1 tablespoon baking powder, pinch of salt, and 1/2 cup sugar. Mix thoroughly and rub in 1/2 cup butter. Wet with enough milk to make dough like baking powder biscuits. Roll out and sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon very thick. Roll dough into a "log," cut into strips and bake in hot oven.

Anna Wiesen, Rockland
St. Cecelia Cook Book

'Eavy 'Ogen

1 cup butter	5 cups flour
1 1/4 cup white sugar	1 tsp. salt
3 eggs	1 heaping tsp. baking powder
1 cup sour milk	1 tsp. baking soda
1 cup raisins	1 tsp. vanilla

Drop from a teaspoon. Bake at 350° F. for 12 minutes.

Beatrice Harding's mother, Cornwall
Cooking with Our Ancestors

Cappelletti

To make cappelletti you just combine eggs and four to make pasta so that you have a stiff dough. You then roll this dough out thin and cut it into small circles. Take a pinch of meat and place it in the middle of each circle. This meat comes from chicken or turkey breasts, or beef. It is cooked on the stove and ground up afterwards. With the meat in the middle of the circles, fold the circles in half and squeeze sides together so they resemble small hats. Cook in chicken or turkey broth for about 15-20 minutes.

Joe Toti family, Virgil Location
Cooking with Our Ancestors

Plain Mince Pies

These may be made of almost any cheap pieces of meat, boiled until tender; add suet or salt pork, chopped very fine; two-thirds as much apple as meat; sugar and spice to your taste. If mince pies are eaten cold, it is better to use salt pork than suet. A lemon and a little sirup of sweetmeats, will greatly improve them. Clove is the most important spice.

Mrs. Bradley's Housekeeper's Guide . . .
1859

Belgian Chicken Booyah

Take apart one large stewing chicken. Put into pot with 1 gallon water. Place on fire and simmer. Add 3 middling size onions, sliced. Cook until tender. Take meat from bones. Cut up fine a small bunch of celery. Put in broth along with 6 carrots and 6 potatoes. Cook well. Add cut up chicken and 2 gills peas. Season.

Fayette Historic Townsite

Pork Ribs

Bake the ribs in rosemary and wine. Make a gravy from the meat juices and wine.

Catherine Torreano O'Neill, Calumet
Catherine Fausone Opal, Calumet

Beefsteak Pie

Take a large beefsteak, fry it slightly in very hot lard, cut it up, and let it cool. Line your pan with rich pie-crust, put in a layer of beef, salt, pepper, and catsup, then lay on some potatoes sliced very thin, with some very fine-chopped onions, a little parsley, then a layer of beef, then, again, potatoes; cover it with crust. Take the gravy that the steak was fried in, put into it a cup of cream and a lump of butter, say an ounce, well rubbed in browned flour; let it simmer a minute or two, then make a hole in the middle of the top crust, and pour in the gravy; if too thick, add a gill of water.

Bake very slowly, and be very sure not to have it too brown.

Mrs. Collins' Table Receipts;
Adapted to Western Housewifery, 1851

Preserved Venison

Layer the deer meat, rosemary leaves and black pepper to fill the crock tightly to the top. Pour oil over all, making sure there are no air bubbles. Place lid on crock and heavy stone on lid. Cure.

Felix and Laura Dozzi, Princeton

Italian Bean Soup

Use pork hocks, put them in the crock with the beans and a bag of seasonings—
fresh garlic, allspice, cloves, crushed whole black pepper.
Add water, the soup should be watery, not real thick.

Take the crock to the bakery on Saturday so it can bake all night. Eat the soup on
Sunday morning.

Catherine Torreano O'Neill, Calumet
Catherine Fausone Opal, Calumet

Comprovada

Layer grape mash, rutabagas, and turnips into a crock. Cover with a plate and
weight down with a rock. Process like "kraut."

Felix and Laura Dozzi, Princeton

Torcetti

1 lb butter
10 cups flour
1 Tbsp sugar
2 yeast cakes
1 lb shortening
1 cup warm milk
1 Tbsp vanilla
4 eggs, beaten

Cut butter and shortening into flour. Combine milk, vanilla, sugar, and yeast.
Add to flour mixture. Beat the eggs and add. Knead lightly. Let rise until dou-
bled. Roll, shape [Break off piece about the size of a walnut, roll between hands
to thickness of a pencil, shape like a horseshoe with both ends together], dip into
sugar, and bake on ungreased cookie sheets 375° for 12-15 minutes. Remove
immediately from sheet.

Erma Caspary, South Range

Torte

Basic Dough

1/2 c. sugar	2-3 cups flour
1/2 tsp vanilla	4 eggs yolks
1/2 stick butter	2-1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup half-and-half or milk	

Mix like any baking powder dough. Line pan with rolled dough. Make peaks on edge of dough by slashing edge on an angle and rolling dough toward center of pan, each peak being about the size of a mouthful of cookie. Fill and bake.

Chocolate Filling

1/2 lb. rice, cooked [about 3 cups cooked rice]	1/4 cup sugar
2 large milk chocolate Hershey bars, 18 oz. each	4 egg whites
1 package citron, chopped	2 whole eggs
1/2 package orange peel, chopped	dash of cinnamon
1 cup pignoli	dash of nutmeg
1/4 stick of butter, melted	

Mix filling and fill pan lined with dough. Bake at 325° for 10 minutes and lower to 300° for an hour.

Luccese Filling

1 Italian bread	3 eggs
1-1/4 cups sugar	grated cheese
3 cups cooked rice	cinnamon
chopped parsley	little bit of salt
1 cup chopped walnuts	1/4 - 1/2 cup melted oleo
some Swiss chard, finely chopped (about a handful)	

Mix. Fill dough-lined pan. Bake 325° for 10 minutes, 300° for 45-60 minutes. Sprinkle cinnamon and sugar over the top when serving.

Erma Caspary, South Range

Coconut pie

3 eggs	1 cup rich milk
1 cup sugar	1/2 cup coconut

Let coconut soak a few minutes in milk. Bake with one crust.

Anna Wiesen, Rockland
St. Cecelia Cook Book

Rabarbra Rødgrod (rhubarb pudding)

Set sugar on the fire in a pan with cold water and drop in rhubarb. Boil gently until done. Remove from fire and stir in vanilla. Mix corn starch and water and add to rhubarb. Set on fire and stir occasionally. Cook for a few minutes. Pour into a bowl and serve cold with cream.

Fayette Historic Townsite

"Grandma" Tassin's Cough Syrup

Mix brandy, honey, and lemon juice and administer as needed. Acts as an expectorant.

Genevieve (Tassin) Tousignant, Ishpeming

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