

1911
concentrated

The Mac Intyre Development of National Lead Co.

TITANIUM DIVISION

When the history of American business during these momentous war years is written, an absorbing chapter will be devoted to the MacIntyre Development.

It will tell of a timely mining project.....deep in the wilds of the Adirondacks.....blasted into being by Axis torpedoes.

It will recount the labors of 1500 engineers and workmen..... miles from a highway, rail line or power source.....who built a huge enterprise in a few short months' time.

And it will list these major contributions to the war effort:
.....more than a quarter-million tons per year of ilmenite, source of titanium dioxide — man's most opaque white pigment — to be used in paints for warships, tanks, guns, planes, and the plants that build them.

.....as a co-product, over 700,000 tons each year of magnetite — an important type of iron ore — to help feed the cavernous maw of America's wartime steel industry.

THE STORY OPENS

But to begin at the beginning:

In 1826, a St. Francis Indian, hired for \$1.50 and a pouch of tobacco, lead a party of prospectors deep into the Adirondacks to the headwaters of the Hudson River.

There was found a ledge of solid iron ore, the outcropping of one of many rich deposits in the vicinity.

Feverish with excitement, the prospectors hurried to Albany and purchased from the State of New York 105,000 acres in the surrounding region — paying with true Yankee shrewdness, ten cents an acre.

But if the price of the land was low, the cost of development in human toil and suffering was appallingly high.

First, a road had to be hacked through virgin forest, with primitive tools, to Lake Champlain fifty miles away. Machinery had to be hauled in and ore sledged and carted out — sometimes at temperatures of 50° below zero.

Nor were remoteness and climate the only enemies. Despite its richness in iron, the ore contained an element which complicated the blast furnace operations.

Finally, in 1857, after a series of catastrophes, including a flood, a financial panic and death of two principal officials, the project was abandoned.

AN INDUSTRY IS BORN

But the ripples of this undertaking set waves in motion that eventually washed up on India's shores.

The impish element of the Adirondack deposit was titanium. Years later, a scientist, working with samples of this particular ore, developed titanium dioxide — and was amazed to find it more opaque than any other known white pigment.

Under the leadership of National Lead Company, this fascinating compound and its derivatives grew to major industrial importance.....finding use not only in paint but in the manufacture of paper, inks, linoleum, leather and rubber goods as well.

To meet an ever-mounting demand, more than 250,000 tons of titanium concentrates flowed to this country in 1939..... principally from the Travancore coast of India where the ilmenite concentrate from the beach sand runs as high as 60% in titanium dioxide.

AN INDUSTRY IS SAVED

But war on the high seas slashed savagely at shipping, and the industry was threatened. In 1940, ilmenite imports narrowed to a slender stream, then a trickle.

Determined not to let belligerent action choke off a material so vitally needed in America's defense program, National Lead Company decided to purchase and develop a portion of the long-dormant Adirondack deposits.

The government, recognizing the project's importance granted a blanket priority to insure delivery of essential construction materials and plant equipment.

About a year ago company engineers arrived on the newly acquired holdings. The scene that confronted them was as wild and as desolate as in 1857. But the year was 1941. Time was short. The need was great. So work began.

CITY IN THE WILDERNESS

Today...one year later...these are the accomplishments:

...hundreds of acres of land, stripped of trees and over-burden, laying bare a vast mass of rich titanium and iron ore.

...sprawled on the hillside, massive mill buildings — the largest seven stories high — housing crushers, concentrators, separators and other equipment.

...farther up the slope, a 1,100,000 gallon reservoir supplying water for all mill and community needs.

...stretching away to the southeast, a 42 mile, 100,000 volt power line bringing current through virgin forest from Ticonderoga.

...running off to the south, an 8½ mile, heavy-duty road over which concentrates will be hauled to a state highway, thence 24 miles farther to a rail head at North Creek. (Later on, the ore will be transported over a 32-mile railroad extension to be built by the Defense Plant Corporation from North Creek to the mine property.)

...and, nestling on the shores of Lake Sanford, one-half mile to the south of the mine, a model mining village of 43 modern private dwellings, a retail store, and a 40-room workmen's dormitory with dining hall.

FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Today, titanium concentrates are flowing to pigment plants and thence to paint makers and other consumers in a ever-broadening stream.

There are 15,000 charted tons of ore in the Sanford Hill deposit... sufficient to maintain peak production for many years. In addition, there are other bodies of ore of unestimated size in the surrounding acreage.

Truly, the MacIntyre Development is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished by American resourcefulness and enterprise.