

earlier. Those evidences may be seen on Isle Royal, at Eagle river, at the North-West Mine, and other places. But the most interesting discoveries of this kind were made at the Minnesota Mine, at the Ontonagon. Mr. Samuel O. Knapp, the then intelligent agent of the Minnesota Mining Company, in the spring of 1848, laid open one of these ancient works. The following is an extract from Messrs. Foster and Whitney's Reports: "The depression was twenty-six feet deep, filled with clay and a matted mass of moldering vegetable matter. When he had penetrated to the depth of eighteen feet, he came to a mass of native copper, ten feet long, three feet wide, and nearly two feet thick, and weighing over six tons. On digging around it the mass was found to rest on billets of oak, supported by sleepers of the same material. This wood, specimens of which have been preserved, by its long exposure to moisture is dark-colored, and has lost all its consistency. A knife-blade may be thrust into it as easily as into a peat-bog. The earth was so packed around the copper as to give it a firm support. The ancient miners had evidently raised it about five feet, and then abandoned the work as too laborious. They had taken off every projecting point which was accessible, so that the exposed surface was smooth." (Part I, page 159.)

Proof of the high antiquity of these works is found in the fact that trees growing over these works are as aged as the forest trees around them. Messrs.