

Drummond Island, One-Time British Outpost, Now Outdoorsman's Haven

Around the 17th century the tourist business in Michigan was a little slow, what with unfriendly Indians, a lack of central heating and the like.

But even then the occasional itinerants would pause to admire the wonders of the state.

One Etienne d'Arles stopped through in 1618 while searching for a back road to China and stayed for years. Nicollet in 1824 wrote glowing reports back to New France of the beauties of the state.

But, as the moth said to the caterpillar, things have changed, and today Drummond Island is all things to the outdoorsman.

FOR HERE, where the relics of Britain's last outpost in the United States sink slowly back into the mold of the earth from their sprang proud and strong 140 years ago, lives the primal stillness of wilderness.

In the clearings, where stubborn Finns in the early part of the century fought climate and soil in a futile attempt to farm this north country, curious deer still vanish in one vaulting leap. Here a man can breathe deeply and listen to the silence. For nature's stillness is not quiet. A man's thoughts leap noisily into his mind and his senses hum like strumming telephone wires.

Drummond is an ameba-shaped island completely surrounded by fish. It supports a population of some 500 highly independent permanent residents and more deer, ducks and partridge than you can shake a 12-gauge at. And in season it manages to tuck some 3,000 hunters and fishermen into its woods and woodlands without ruffling a leaf.

THE ISLAND lies in the mouth of St. Mary's river down which tumble the savage waters of Lake Superior. It is separated from the mainland of the upper peninsula by the west by the De Tour passage and from Canada's Cockburn Island on the east by False Detour passage.

In the spring and fall black bass, great northern pike, walleyes and giant yellow lake perch thump the bottoms of fishermen's boats in Pontanigan Bay. Some of the best duck hunting in the state is available on the 30 bays and coves and 34 inland lakes.

Conservationists estimate the island supports 30 deer per square mile—Drummond contains 133 of these nature-rich miles—and its ruffed and sharp-tail grouse and snowshoe rabbit hunting ranks with the best in Michigan.

OF COURSE many of the sportsmen bring their own facilities with them, for open camping is often the rule rather than the exception. But if you prefer more luxurious accommodations, there are 20 to 29 resorts on the island with modern tourist cabins and lodges, boat liveries and guide service.

The resort business is expanding, of course, along with tourism all over Michigan, but Drummond is

just couldn't hold their liquor. While they were a bit loose on their feet, Americans steered the island around the east and north sides of the island instead of passing through the De Tour passage between Drummond and the mainland of the upper peninsula.

This is known as a Yankee ingenuity, to Americans, at least. But Drummond fell to the British because that's how False Detour passage on the east side of the island got its name.

Col. McDonald was left high and dry, so to speak, but he was a stubborn cuss. He spent a good bit of his time writing nasty letters to the Americans at Fort Mackinac protesting that Drummond should belong to England, but he didn't move his garrison until 1828 when he got word Americans were moving an expedition to dump him into the De Tour passage.

TODAY there is little to mark old Fort Drummond. Massive, deep-throated chimneys reach up like bent blunt fingers, all that remain of the 60-old buildings. The parade ground is still discernible and a few paths exist where broad military roads once stretched.

THE CEMETERY where so many of those foreign soldiers of another century lie undisturbed by sunrise or sunset gun is nearly lost to the undergrowth, and the wood-healthier have been largely removed.

There were no white settlers on the island after 1828 until a contingent led by the Daniel Murrall Seaman family fled in 1851 from a Mormon-controlled Beaver Island after a disagreement with "King" James Smith.

Next came the Bailey family from Bailey's Harbor, Wis., in 1850, and in 1851, when the present century an attempt was made to colonize the island with Finnish people. A number of them bought land and arrived from the old country to farm it. But top soil is thin over the deep underlying rock, the summer is short, and winters severe. Farming proved unproductive.

THE CHARM of Drummond island was described in 1829 by a

Author to Autograph Books at Old Prof's

Daniel D. Nern, author of "Black and White Autographing" copies of his book Friday and Saturday at Prof's bookstore, 4305 N. Woodward, Royal Oak. The novel deals with the trials of a Negro family in the south and Detroit. Nern lives in Oak Park.

Bike Riders Battled Hard For Highways

Back in the 1890's the bicycle rider was a real pioneer in the agitation for better Michigan highways, according to material in the University of Michigan historical collections.

The late Roger L. Morrison, a member of the university faculty, wrote:

"The first great road-building era, which was started by the westward-bound pioneer, was ended by the railroad train and for what a generation there was little interest in highways.

"Reawakening of interest in roads in this country was a slow process, and the new pioneer, who wanted better local roads, was the bicyclist.

"The bicycle was first a missionary, more reviled than respected, but as his numbers increased, his demands for roads began to attract attention.

"The bicyclists formed the League of American Wheelmen and became a great force in the good roads movement. Unfortunately, however, it was a force bent against a stone wall of indifference and even bitter antagonism on the part of many taxpayers.

"TO NUMEROUS good citizens the bicycle was anathema, and in many localities a good-roads advocate was about as popular as an abolitionist in the ante-bellum South."

Highly prized good "century bars" were awarded by clubs to those hardy individuals who rode 100 miles in one day, and century bars were the reward of those who made 50 miles. Some riders proudly displayed long century bars worn over their shoulders.

"Century runs" required reasonably good roads to say the least, and so demands for such roads continued to increase.

Pays \$70 Fine

Dr. Peter E. Tynman, 18781 Dolores, Lathrup Village, was fined \$70 and \$5 costs when he appeared before Birmingham Municipal Judge John C. Emery on Wednesday of last week on charges of reckless driving. Dr. Tynman was arrested by Birmingham police June 17.

Bound For Indiana

Margo Mensing and Michal Forster of Birmingham high school will attend the second division of the 12th annual high school journalism institute at Indiana university July 15-18. This division, with 171 high school students from 55 schools is devoted to training and practical work for orifices. It is printed weekly and bi-weekly papers.

Cost Cutting Saw Studied For Hardwood

Lower Michigan's low-grade hardwoods, an estimated million and a half acres in farm wood lots, long untouched by the lumber industry because of prohibitive costs, may prove economically valuable as a result of University of Michigan research.

In addition, "hidden values" of removing the inferior hardwoods could be better forest practices and use of forest resources plus improvement of forest stands.

That's the opinion of experts from the department of wood technology, school of natural resources, who are conducting a study of the problem on a grant provided by the U. S. forest service, Lake States experimental station, St. Paul.

Directed by Prof. Everett L. Ellis, the project is now in its third year. It involves work with a "bolter saw," one that cuts "cleans" four-foot logs called "bolts." Until now, Ellis points out, this type saw was used almost exclusively in the New England states.

ELLIS FURTHER maintains that the abundance of lower Michigan hardwoods are too defective for conventional saw mill purposes but can be sawn "economically with the bolter saw."

If the process prove financially feasible, inferior hardwoods could be removed resulting in better forest practices—that is, the bared

area could be replanted with material of greater market value. Ultimately, Ellis says, the entire hardwood stand would improve.

As the research has progressed, graduate student Walter Johnson has been busy operating the "bolter saw" at the school's 840-acre Stinchfield woods reserve near here.

Procedures for drying the hardwood bolts are currently being tested by the experts in the wood technology laboratory, Ellis adds.

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