HISTORIC STRUCTURES AT ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK

Historic Contexts and Associated Property Types

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DOCUMENT OVERVIEW
This document presents five major cultural historic themes related to Isle Royale National Park, and applies them to the identification and evaluation of extant historic structures in the park that may be eligible for the National Register according to Criteria A. The National Register Criteria is "the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture that is present in districts, sites, buildings, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and: (under Criteria A) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history."¹ Three of Isle Royale's historic themes—Historic Mining, Navigation and Maritime History, and Commercial Fishing—have been previously addressed in National Register nominations with the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office. The two additional themes of Conservation and National Park Service Administration, and Resort and Recreational Development, have been identified in the park's Cultural Resources Management Plan.

This document presents contextual histories for each of the five historic themes.² Each of the five contexts is followed by a discussion of surviving property types associated with that theme. The discussion of associated property types includes both primary and secondary structures, applies National Register criteria for evaluating integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, and association to both sites and structures; and may include notes on contributing landscape features. Evaluation of the significance of structures will be based on their ability to represent the above contexts, with consideration given to the physical integrity of the structure. The significance of properties will be justified according to the number of surviving within each context: significance is based on integrity, and on the ability of the property to represent the context(s). Those properties that survive in lesser numbers may be viewed less critically, if they retain key structures. Additional sites within the Isle Royale National Park boundary that are associated with these historic contexts may be identified in future surveys. Sketches of properties are included, when available. A notebook containing photographs of properties accompanies this document, and can be used to reference structures addressed in the Associated Property Types sections. Charts that identify all properties

² Much of the text of this document has been summarized from the work of Theodore J. Karamanski, Timothy Cochrane, and Richard Zeitlein, The Enticing Island: A History of Isle Royale National Park (Draft, August 1991). Footnotes are provided to indicate additional sources of information. Photocopied images taken from Isle Royale: A Photographic History, by Thomas P. and Kendra L. Gale, are used for comparative purposes, and assist in historic context development. As this is an internal document, not to be used for publication, permission for use was not requested.
surveyed in the 1995 LCS survey are included at the end of this document.

This document has been prepared to aid in the completion of the update for the List of Classified Structures for Isle Royale National Park, and addresses extant structures only. It is not intended as an official National Register nomination, but as a National Park Service tool in the preliminary evaluation of its historical cultural resources, in compliance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This document does not address all contexts that are be represented in the park, particularly those related to archeological resources, which will need to be articulated in future documentation. The theme of historic logging on Isle Royale was not included, due to lack of surviving structures. Mission 66 architecture is briefly addressed within the theme of Conservation and National Park Service Administration, although properties associated with this theme have not yet reached historic status.

**GEOPHYSICAL SETTING AND BACKGROUND**

Isle Royale is an island archipelago located in northwestern Lake Superior, approximately 13 miles to the closest point of Ontario, Canada, and 18 miles to Minnesota. The main island of Isle Royale is 45 miles long and nine miles wide at its widest point. It has an area totaling 210 square miles, and has approximately 200 smaller islands scattered about the periphery of the island. The protected harbor areas, and small islands within these harbors was where much of the cultural development would occur, especially in the long, sheltered harbor areas on the southeastern and northwestern ends of the island. The main island has 83 lakes in its interior, and a number of smaller ponds. Isle Royale’s topography is characterized by ridge and swale contours that are oriented southwest-northeast, along the lines of uplifted geological features. The highest elevation on the island is Mt. Desor, which is 794 feet above Lake Superior, and 1,394 feet above sea level.

The geology of Isle Royale is dominated by Keweenawan volcanics. Interbedded sediments are exposed in the upwarping of the deposits that tilt towards the southeast, and mirror the formations in the Keweenaw Peninsula, which tilt towards the northwest. The southwestern end of the island is comprised of sedimentary deposits that also have corresponding features on the south shore of Lake Superior as sandstones and conglomerates.

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6 Clark, 2; Huber, 1975:56-57.
Copper has played an important role in both the prehistoric and historic cultural history of Isle Royale. Fissure deposits of copper on the island were located in transverse faults (those which cut across the beds), and copper also occurred in lodes in sedimentary deposits. Most of the copper obtained by both prehistoric and historic miners was extracted from these fissures.\(^7\)

Soils throughout Isle Royale are very thin and poorly developed, although they are somewhat more developed on the southwestern end. There are two major upland forest types on Isle Royale: the southern boreal forest, dominated by spruce, fir, and birch; and a temperate deciduous community of sugar maple, yellow birch, and red oak. In the lowland areas of the island, communities of cedar and spruce can be found.\(^8\)

The climate of Isle Royale is very similar to the general Upper Great Lakes region. Daily lows in winter are often 6 degrees (Fahrenheit) warmer than mainland temperatures, and summer temperatures are much lower than those on the mainland.\(^9\)

\(^7\) Clark, 2.
\(^8\) Ibid., 3.
Figure 1. Location of Isle Royale National Park, Michigan, from Archeological Survey and Testing Island Royale National Park: 1987-1990 Seasons, 1995, Caven P. Clark, 2.
CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Isle Royale’s earliest users date to the Archaic period, and were miners who extracted native float copper. Later, Native groups continued visiting the island to find copper, gather plants and berries, hunt, and fish. Isle Royale has had an abundance of fish, wildlife, plants, and minerals, that were exploited by both the prehistoric and historic residents of the island. The island’s two most historically significant resources—copper and fish—were responsible for the sustained human presence on the island for the past 4,000 years, and drew numerous explorers and entrepreneurs over the last 200 years.\(^\text{10}\) However, Isle Royale has always been a very isolated and difficult place to live, and throughout history, occupancy on the island has been, for the most part, seasonal.

Explorers and missionaries provided the first recorded accounts of the island, but it was the fur bearing animals of Isle Royale such as beaver, muskrat, otter, mink, hare, coyote, fox, and lynx that attracted trappers and traders during the 1600s and 1700s.\(^\text{11}\) The American Fur Company was the first to initiate commercial fishing operations from Isle Royale in 1837. The company had posts on the island during the 1830s, with the main depot located at Checker Point in Siskiwit Bay. The company would bring the first large vessels into the Isle Royale’s harbors. These operations lasted only two years on Isle Royale, and the next commercial development would come in the form of copper mining ventures, the first boom occurring in 1843.

There were three phases of historic copper mining at Isle Royale, occurring between 1843-1855, 1873-1881, and 1889-1893. Most of the mining operations were located on the perimeter of the island, the majority of which were at the eastern end. Only four mines were located in the island’s interior. Several companies had initial success, but eventually all ventures folded.\(^\text{12}\)

The navigational and maritime history of Isle Royale is closely associated with the historic mining, commercial fishing, and tourism industries. Copper mining on the island and the growth of Lake Superior shipping instigated the establishment of four lighthouses around Isle Royale. Between the 1880s and the 1920s, increased lake traffic at Isle Royale fostered the growth of both the commercial fishing and tourism industries. Harbor facilities that served the industries of mining, fishing, and tourist were developed, beginning in the late 1830s, at several points on the island: Washington Harbor at the northwestern end, Siskiwit Bay in the south-central area, Rock Harbor and Tobin Harbor at

\(^{\text{10}}\) Clark, 4.
\(^{\text{11}}\) Ibid., 3.
the southeastern end, and McCargoe Cove and Belle Harbor at the north eastern side of the island. The increased boat traffic brought inevitable shipwrecks, and ten large wrecked ships that date from 1877 to 1947 remain in Isle Royale's waters.\(^\text{13}\)

Commercial fishing had been initiated on Isle Royale with the American Fur Company operations in 1837, and would last on the island for over a century. In the 1880s, the commercial fishing industry boomed, as regular shipping and transportation was made available by the increased Lake Superior commercial traffic, and the establishment of large-scale fishing companies on the island. The large A. Booth and Company operation was based on the western end of the island, while numerous other small scale operations were initiated in the island's sheltered harbors, with concentrations in the south east end in Rock and Tobin Harbors, at Siskiwit Bay, and a large number of Scandinavian fishermen settling near the Booth Company fishery at Washington Harbor. By the early 20th century, over 100 fishing families were seasonally based at locations all over the island.

It was Isle Royale's commercial fishermen who initiated the final industry of recreation on the island. National trends in recreation had initiated interest in Isle Royale in the late 1800s, and the tourist industry and commercial fishing industries on the island were reciprocal to each other, as each industry brought an increase in the essential shipping and passenger transportation opportunities to the island. Growing gradually from a few rooms to let at a fisherman's home in Washington Harbor, a number of resorts and summer homes dotted the island by the 1910s and 20s, and vital summer communities developed at the southeastern end of the island in Rock and Tobin Harbors. The tourism industry would thrive until the 1930s, when the idea for an Isle Royale National Park was initiated.

The conservation movement and concern for Isle Royale's vulnerable wilderness brought the national government's involvement in creating a national park of the island archipelago. In doing so, the Civilian Conservation Corps volunteers would play an important role in the implementation of park facilities and trails on the island. CCC camps were posted between 1935 and 1941 on the island, at Senter Point in Siskiwit Bay, Rock Harbor, and Washington Harbor. With the dedication of Isle Royale National Park in 1946, a new era of cultural use began.

**ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES**

Surviving structures within the Isle Royale National Park boundaries reflect these five historic themes, and represent the diversity of economic and settlement patterns that occurred within this portion of the Lake Superior region that was near the Upper

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 4.
Peninsula of Michigan, Minnesota's northwoods, and Ontario, Canada from the late 19th century to the present. These patterns resulted in “temporary” or seasonal structures intended for short term use, but that were recycled by later occupants for different uses. Because of the tradition of reuse, many sites with historic properties represent a layering of history, with elements from earlier occupations present.

Few sites from the earlier periods exist independent of representatives of later developments, particularly that of the predominant surviving resource type, the recreational cabin. The mining era, for example, has few surviving structures, although some areas in which mining activity occurred may have later been used by fishermen, recreationalists, and for conservation-related activities (i.e. CCC camps). Some family-operated fisheries were converted to summer recreational homes as the connection between industries became interrelated. Some owners diversified or switched to other operations in attempt to profit from copper mining and fishing to fishing and recreation, or, in the case of the Wendigo Mine Company, from mining to recreation. (The Wendigo Mine Company office was renovated into the Washington Club, a private sporting club).

The architecture of Isle Royale involves considerations of stylistic classification and material integrity. There have been three major building materials on Isle Royale: masonry, which includes both stone and concrete; log (horizontal and vertical); and frame. The frame buildings can be further described as vernacular (fishery, resort, and, recreational buildings); or with elements of the Greek Revival style (Singer's Island House, Washington Club), Craftsman style (Rock Harbor Lodge, some private recreational buildings), and Colonial Revival style (Davidson house). There are no high style structures at the park. Except for the lighthouses, most surviving structures are simple, one-story frame buildings of moderate size, clad in either board, clapboard, shiplap, or droplap siding. Surviving log buildings are horizontal saddle notched construction and date to the early 1890s, are with and are associated with commercial fishing and/or recreation. One exception is a collection of log buildings built during the 1920s as a recreational compound (which includes buildings on two separate islands).

Distinguishing characteristics such as the arrangement of buildings within a site, decorative detailing such as lake-stone chimneys, brackets or whimsical application of local materials can help in the identification of the original purposes and uses of properties. Occasionally these details and their inherent meanings can be obscured by the application of modern materials. Identifying property types associated with historic contexts, then, considers not just their present or latest use, but
whether or not sufficient remnants remain that associate the structure with earlier historic contexts. Because fewer representative historic properties exist intact from the earlier developments, and independent from later development, the integrity of the surviving representative elements is given greater consideration if the resources contain key elements that are associated with the context. Alterations or loss of some elements will not be viewed as deleterious to overall integrity as would resources in greater number.

EVALUATION CHARTS
Charts that outline certain factors pertinent to the evaluation of significance of individual structures are provided at the end of this document. These include the name and location of the property, the criteria under which the property is evaluated, and the structure name and number. The charts also include the construction history of each structure (when known), its status as a contributing or non-contributing building, and its physical condition. Physical condition is rated as good (G), fair (F), or poor (P). The structure's integrity is also rated, in respect to its integrity of location (L); setting (S); design (D); materials (M); workmanship (W); association (A); and feeling (F). These seven aspects of integrity are rated as high (H), medium (M), or low (L). The eligibility (or ineligibility) of individual structures is provided under the "Structure Eligibility" heading. Comments regarding the integrity and eligibility of the property as a "complex" are also given.
1995 LCS SURVEY: LIST OF PROPERTIES SURVEYED

HISTORIC CONTEXT #1: HISTORIC MINING
- Minong Mine District
- Island Mine
- Cemetery on Cemetery Island

HISTORIC CONTEXT #2: NAVIGATION AND MARITIME HISTORY
- Passage Island Lighthouse

HISTORIC CONTEXT #3: COMMERCIAL FISHING
- Rude Fishery / Fisherman's Home
- Sivertson / Eckmark / Singer Property
- Holte Fishery
- Anderson Fishery
- Mattson Fishery
- Bangsund Fishery
- Andrew / Scotland Fishery

HISTORIC CONTEXT #4: RESORT AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- Small-scale rustic resort
  - Holger Johnson's Resort and Trading Post
- Large-scale full service resorts
  - Rock Harbor Lodge
  - Singer's Island House Resort
  - Minong Lodge
  - Belle Isle Resort
- Private recreational camps
  - Rock Harbor District:
    - Ralph Camp
    - Warren Camp
    - Farmer Camp
    - Davidson Camp
  - Tobin Harbor District:
    - Snell Camp
    - Siebert Camp
    - Connolly Camp
    - Kemmer Camp
    - Beard Camp
    - Edwards Camp
    - Stack/Wolbrink Camp
    - Gale Camp
    - Merritt Camp
    - How Camp
    - Dassler Camp
    - Savage Camp
    - John's Camp
    - Clay Camp
    - Horner Camp
- Private resort colonies and compounds
  - Barnum Colony
  - McGath Compound
  - McPherren Compound

HISTORIC CONTEXT #5: CONSERVATION AND
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ADMINISTRATION
- Mott Island National Park Service Headquarters
- Windigo
- Daisy Farm
Isle Royale Mining Sites and Settlements

Figure 1.1. Map of Isle Royale mining sites and settlements, from Gale and Gale, Isle Royale: A Photographic History, 24.
PERIODS: 1843-1855, 1873-1881, and 1889-1893

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION NUMBERS
Minong Mine Historic District; November 11th, 1977 (#77000153)
Rock Harbor Lighthouse; March 8th, 1977 (#77000154)
Isle Royale Lighthouse (as part of Thematic Resource Nomination for
United States Coast Guard Lighthouses and Light Stations on the Great
Lakes; 1980.

Historic copper mining on Isle Royale as it relates to the Minong Mine,
Rock Harbor Lighthouse, and Isle Royale Lighthouse has been
addressed in the National Register Nominations and Thematic Resource
Nominations for these properties.

OVERVIEW
Historic mining activity on Isle Royale began as part of the Lake
Superior mining boom of the 1840s, and occurred in three distinct
eras, the last period ending in 1893. Due to the remote location
of the island and the subsequent costs of refining and
transportation, all three eras failed to produce profitable
endeavors.

The Lake Superior basin had provided almost all the copper used
by prehistoric Native Americans in the eastern portion of the
United States.1 Native Americans began exploiting the copper
deposits on the surface of Isle Royale around 3000 B.C. Over
1,000 pits dating to the prehistoric period have been found on the
island, ostensibly in areas that proved most productive. Copper
deposits were especially abundant along Minong Ridge.2 These
prehistoric pits served as indicators for later mining ventures,
providing evidence of where copper deposits might be found.

The first historically recorded mining boom on Isle Royale was one
of speculative excitement, and occurred after the Lake Superior
Land District opened in 1843. Although this period ended 12
years later in 1855, the mining company's shipping activities
increased lake traffic and served as impetus for the establishment
of the Rock Harbor Lighthouse, as well as other island
development.

The second mining phase on Isle Royale began in 1873 and
lasted only eight years. This period saw the exploitation of
archaeological copper mines originally worked by prehistoric
Native Americans. Though it brought year-round settlement to
the island, the mining activity ended in 1881 due to low profits.

1 John R. Halsey, "Miskwabik–Red Metal: Lake Superior Copper and
the Indians of Eastern North America," Michigan History, (Sept/Oct

1983): 32-41, quoted in Larry Lankton, Cradle to Grave: Life, Work, and
Death at the Lake Superior Copper Mines. Oxford University Press,
2 Lawrence Rakestraw, Historic Mining on Isle Royale (Houghton, MI:
Isle Royale Natural History Association, 1965), 1.
The mining activities of the second period also spurred the construction of the Isle Royale Light on Menagerie Island in 1875. Isle Royale's third mining era was based on new technologies, and was well financed by an English syndicate. This attempt lasted only four years, between 1889 and 1893. When the syndicate's venture failed, the company invested in island tourism and resort development. A number of the old mining buildings were adapted to serve the needs of this new industry.

HISTORIC COPPER MINING IN THE LAKE SUPERIOR BASIN
The successful mining of copper in the Lake Superior basin began before Michigan had become a state. In 1820, territorial governor Lewis Cass and Henry Schoolcraft made an expedition to the Keweenaw Peninsula in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The trip included a visit to one of the main attractions of the Keweenaw, the large two-ton boulder of float copper that had been unearthed during prehistoric times by American Indians. Encouraged by the size of the copper nugget, Schoolcraft recommended that the U.S. government mine the deposits in the Upper Peninsula. Although the government declined, a 1826 treaty with the Ojibwa allowed for federal explorations for minerals on Indian lands. In 1831, Schoolcraft again visited the Keweenaw, with geologist Douglass Houghton.4

"Douglass Houghton was to become Michigan's first state geologist, and as such, was an important contributor to the opening up of the copper district, ten years after his first visit. Michigan became a state in 1837, after the federal government had settled a border dispute between it and Ohio over the area around Toledo. Ohio eventually received the land, and as compensation, Michigan received the Upper Peninsula."5

INITIAL COPPER MINING ON ISLE ROYALE: 1843-1855
Douglass Houghton visited Michigan's Upper Peninsula for a second time in 1840 as the Michigan state geologist. During this trip he also visited Isle Royale. His task was to identify natural resources that could be exploited and turned into wealth and jobs. It was Houghton's 1841 report to the Michigan state legislature that brought the first great mineral rush to the region, and to Isle Royale. Although his report was only guardedly optimistic about the profitability of copper mining in the area, it brought attention to the geological similarities between the

5 Lankton, 7.
Keweenaw Peninsula and Isle Royale and stirred interest in the island as a profitable option for mining speculation.

"In 1843 the U.S. Secretary of War established a land office at Copper Harbor at the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula. The land office initially offered lease permits to mine for copper on the Keweenaw and on Isle Royale, but it soon switched to outright sales of mineral lands. By the mid-1840s the first real mine rush in American history had begun."\(^6\) From its opening through 1865, the Keweenaw, with a small contribution from Isle Royale, accounted for three-fourths of America's copper production, dwarfing production levels achieved by other early copper-producing districts in Connecticut, New Jersey, Vermont, and Tennessee.\(^7\)

Several profitable mines appeared on the Keweenaw Peninsula during the 1840s and early 1850s, including the Cliff, at the northern end of the Keweenaw, and the Minesota [sic], at the base of the peninsula. "The Cliff yielded impressive quantities of native copper, and production reached more than a million pounds per year. In 1849, when the company paid out $60,000 in dividends, the first to be received in Lake Superior copper."\(^8\) The Minesota Mine, initiated in 1847, was also successful, and had located a profitable fissure deposit on property previously worked by American Indians. This company's total production reached nearly four million pounds per year after a decade's operation.\(^9\)

The nation's copper rush peaked between 1844 and 1847, and although it swept the Northwest, it was concentrated on the Keweenaw Peninsula of Upper Michigan. This craze brought thousands of prospectors to the region, the majority of which were unsuccessful.

Spurred by the success of the mining ventures on the mainland, mining camps began to appear on Isle Royale. By 1847 eleven distinct mining ventures were present, many of which expanded operations to more than one site. Some ventures consisted of prospectors who formed partnerships with Eastern investors, but most organizations combined capital from a range of financiers and formed stock companies.

\[^6\text{Ibid.}, 8.\]
\[^8\text{Lankton, 9.}\]
\[^9\text{Halsey, "Miskwabic," 34-34; Charles K. Hyde, "From Subterranean Lotteries to Orderly Investment: Michigan Copper and Eastern Dollars, 1841-1865," Mid-America: An Historical Review 66 (Jan 1984): 8, quoted in Lankton, 10.}\]
Isle Royale's copper resources initially appeared abundant. An early Isle Royale prospector wrote that "...the whole place so teems with copper, that we even found the pebbles on the shore ingrained with it." However, the nature of the reserves were such that while they appeared plentiful, the veins repeatedly "pinched out" or stretched beyond reach under the Lake Superior shoreline. Although some masses of copper were more than six tons in weight, the shafts from which they came generally yielded low-grade ore.\(^\text{10}\) Moreover, Isle Royale's remote location resulted in high production and transportation costs, that eventually doomed each venture to failure.

During this first rush of mining activity on Isle Royale, operations appeared around the entire island. The Rock Harbor area showed the most promise, and was to become the communication and activity center of the island. Development in the Rock Harbor area included the Smithwick Mine (near the current site of the Rock Harbor Lodge), the Siskowit Mine across from Mott Island, and the Ohio and Isle Royale Company. On the northern side of the island, the Pittsburgh and Isle Royale Mining Company were developed in Todd Harbor, approximately 30 miles from Rock Harbor.

Founded in 1843, the Smithwick Mine was the earliest mine on Isle Royale. It was located near the current site of the Rock Harbor Lodge. However, there was not much activity at this site until 1847, when a few miners' cabins and a blacksmith shop were constructed.

The Siskowit Mine was the most extensive operation during the first mining period. In 1847 the Siskowit Mining Company conducted test excavations at Isle Royale, concentrating on the shores of Mott Island. The company eventually focused on a site across the harbor on the main island, where several abandoned log cabins marked the location of a promising mine.\(^\text{11}\) During the winter of 1847-1848 a profitable vein of copper was discovered. By the close of the 1849 season, this vein proved very productive, yielding 31,360 pounds of copper. The operation's labor force numbered thirty-four men.\(^\text{12}\)

The Siskowit Mine Company continued to invest heavily in the operation, and began to refine the copper on the island to reduce transportation costs. They also invested in a steam-driven pump


\(^{11}\) Ibid., 57.

\(^{12}\) Karamanski, et al., citing Siskowit Mining Company. (1848), 6; Siskowit Mine Company. (1850), 11.
Figure 1.2. This Siskowit Mining Company building, photographed here by in 1868 by the Foote Expedition, was probably used by the miners as an office, bunkhouse, and storage area. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 22.
to drain the shafts, and a stamp mill to crush the ore-bearing rock. In 1852, 62,272 pounds of refined copper were produced, the company's most productive season. However, water infiltration continued to thwart mining activities as the copper veins dipped below the Lake Superior water level. By 1854 the eastern-most vein gave out completely, and by 1855 the Siskowit Mine closed. The venture ended an economic failure, even though 190,736 pounds of refined copper had been produced between 1849 and 1852.  

During the peak of this first mining boom on Isle Royale, the townsite of Ransom (at the site currently known as Daisy Farm), built by the Isle Royale and Ohio Company, became the center of activity in Rock Harbor. Ransom became the "capital" of Isle Royale during this pioneering period, and for several years maintained a population of fifty. The town consisted of a large log building that was used as the storehouse and office, a furnace shop, a blacksmith shop, an engine house, a smelter (one of the first on the Upper Lakes, and the only one on the island), a large dwelling house, and several cabins. One cabin was described as "new" and "very large and quite convenient, having eight large rooms on the first floor, also commodious chambers."  

Ransom became the center of activity for miners because its wharf could accommodate any size ship at its dock—schooners, steamers, and side-wheelers. People from the other Ohio and Isle Royale Company mines (the Epidote and Datolite) brought in their copper ore and picked up supplies at Ransom. Men from the Pittsburgh and Isle Royale Mining Company at Todd Harbor would make a thirty-mile boat journey to just to visit Ransom.

The population of Ransom consisted of Irish, Cornish, and German immigrants, as well as French-Canadians, Native Americans, and Americans. Because they brought with them experience in working underground in southwest England, the Cornish carried a great deal of influence among the miners. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Cornwall's mines had been modernized through the application of new technologies and inventions, such as steam-powered pumping, winding and stamping machinery, and other advances that increased worker productivity. Safety was also advanced through underground ventilation techniques, and other modern mining

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14 Ibid., 56.  
15 Karamanski, et al., citing Lydia Douglass, Diary, 9 June 1848 to December 30, 1848; typescript, Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, 15.
practices. Many of these methods and techniques were applied at Isle Royale mining operations.\[16\]

In 1855, the Rock Harbor Lighthouse was constructed in Rock Harbor, in order to guide what had been an increasing number of ships traveling the shoal-filled Middle Islands Passage to the Smithwick and Ransom Mines. Congress had approved a $5,000 appropriation in 1853 for the construction of the light. However, by 1855 all mining activity had ceased due to poor copper deposits and the high cost of transporting the mineral from the island. The lighthouse ceased operation in 1859, but would be repaired and relit in 1873 during the second mining boom.

**SECOND PERIOD OF MINING ON ISLE ROYALE: 1873-1881**

The second wave of prospectors came to Isle Royale in 1873. These were experienced copper seekers, from a large, well-financed corporation that planned on integrating Isle Royale with other northern Michigan mining districts. A strong industrial economy existed in the United States after the Civil War, and the Great Lakes region had become established as the “political and economic heartland of America.”\[17\] Furthermore, the copper market was changed dramatically by U.S. industrial expansion.

Copper sold for 55 cents per pound by 1865, as opposed to a pre-war price of 18 cents per pound.\[18\]

The new mining districts on the Keweenaw Peninsula around Houghton had proved to be the most profitable sites in the region. The industry was dominated by the Quincy Mining Company, located just outside Houghton, and the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company, farther north on the peninsula. The Quincy Mining Company was interested in exploiting Isle Royale copper, and mining officials purchased 70,000 acres of Isle Royale land through the North American Mineral Lands Company. During the second period of mining on Isle Royale, prospectors learned to spot promising mine locations by identifying prehistoric diggings. Just as the productive Calumet and Hecla Mining Company’s sites were identified from evidence of extensive prehistoric diggings, so were the locations at McCargoe Cove and Siskiwit Bay on Isle Royale.\[19\]

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\[19\] Ibid., citing Alfred C. Lane, “Geological Report on Isle Royale.” *The Upper Peninsula 1893-1897*, vol. 6, Geological Survey of Michigan (Lansing, 1898), 16, 21; Island Mining Company, January 15, 1874, Isle Royale Mining Collection, Calumet and Hecla Mining Corporation Papers, Michigan Technological University Archives, Houghton, MI.
The Quincy mining interests focused on the Siskiwit Bay location, formed the Island Mine Company, and began operations in 1873. In 1875 Isle Royale became organized as its own county, separate from Keweenaw County, but maintained two townships, one on the eastern end of the island at Cove, and at Siskiwit Bay at the island's western end. A village of about 130 people sprang up at the Siskowit Bay settlement.

The Island Mine Company installed equipment for a range of processes. They sunk two 200-foot shafts, and dammed a creek to harness water power to run a sawmill (and possibly to power the stamp mill). Alfred Merritt, whose grandson, Grant Merritt, still has a home lease on the island, built a road from the townsite to the mine, and helped bring a large steam hoist up to the mine site. Construction was begun on a railway that would run from the mine down to the shore. A one-hundred-foot wooden dock was built that was wide enough to accommodate horse-drawn wagons. At Senter Point, across the bay, a massive sandstone powder house was constructed away from the village to store explosives. Both of the company's shafts were productive, revealing veins of ore almost twenty feet thick.

Due to the increased traffic from copper mining enterprises, Isle Royale's second lighthouse, the Isle Royale Light, was constructed in 1875. Because the Island Mine Company site was difficult to access, authorization for a new lighthouse was given to light the passage into the bay, and would also serve to warn the increasing Lake Superior ship traffic of the existence of the island's south shore. The Isle Royale Light was built on Menagerie Island at the entrance to Siskiwit Bay. It had a fifty-five foot octagonal tower and an attached keeper's house made of sandstone. The light was automated in 1916 and remains active today.

The Island Mine Company faced difficulties, however, when in 1875 their docks and stamp mill burned, and the thick and promising veins turned out to be a "bunchy," meaning that the copper was not evenly distributed through the ore belt. The final blow came with a sharp decline in copper prices. Operations were halted by the fall of 1875, even though $550,000 had been invested in the operation.

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21 Karamanski, et al., "Enticing Island," 64.
24 Ibid., citing Portage Lake Mining Gazette, November 13, 1873, March 19, 1874, March 31, 1874, September 23, 1875; Ontonagon Herald, August 25, 1883; Rakestraw, *Historic Mining on Isle Royale*, 14.
After the mining failure, Island Mine owners leased the site to the Equal Rights Tribute Company in an attempt to recover some of its investment. Over a three year period, the company produced 213,245 pounds of refined copper, but the mine was closed in 1879 and the village was abandoned.\textsuperscript{25}

On the other side of the island, mining operations at McCargo Cove went quite well. The extensive quarries of the Woodland Indians along the Minong Ridge basalt were discovered by mining interests, and several Detroit capitalists associated with the Calumet and Hecla Mine invested in the operation. They provided the money to establish three interrelated mining ventures, of which the most significant was the Minong Mining Company.\textsuperscript{26}

The Minong Mine Company experienced initial success with the Minong Mine. A massive copper boulder weighing nearly 6000 pounds (that had been left by prehistoric Native American miners) was unearthed and displayed at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The success of the Minong Mine (and the display of the three-ton copper boulder) served to attract a million dollars in capital. The company invested in a diamond drill, which was state-of-the-art for that time, and in both 1876 and 1877 the mine produced over 100,000 pounds of refined copper. In 1878 production lagged, however, as the rock became less rich. The company reorganized, and in 1879 the mine work force was reduced to twelve men. The site was completely abandoned after 1885.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{FINAL MINING ERA ON ISLE ROYALE: 1889-1893}

The failure of well-organized, well-financed, and experienced miners at the Minong Mine and the Island Mine disillusioned developers regarding Isle Royale's future in copper mining. Even though the need for copper was increasing in late nineteenth century America, there was little interest in Isle Royale's prospects immediately following the closing of these operations. However, Jacob Houghton, an experienced prospector and

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., citing B.S. Butler and W.S. Birbank, "The Copper Deposits of Michigan," \textit{Professional Paper, U.S. Geological Survey}, no. 144 (Washington, 1929), 16; Rakestraw Historic Mining on Isle Royale, 14-15; Island Mining Company, January 15, 1874, Isle Royale Mining Collection, Calumet and Hecla Papers, Michigan Technological University, Houghton, MI.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., citing Cove Land and Mining Company, September 24, 1874, and the Minong Mining Company, December 1, 1874, Isle Royale Mining Collection, Calumet and Hecla Papers, Michigan Technological University, Houghton, MI.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., citing Annual Report of the Minong Mining Company, December 1, 1876, 3; Butler and Birbank, "The Copper Deposits of Michigan," \textit{U.S.G.S. Papers}, p. 90; Portage Lake Mining Gazette, September 12, 1878; Ontonagon Miner, August 21, 1880.
brother of the esteemed surveyor Douglass Houghton, held great faith in Isle Royale's minerals. In 1889, as an agent for the North American Mineral Land Corporation (which held 84,000 acres of Isle Royale land) Houghton entered into a syndicate with a group of Englishmen who were interested in copper mining on Isle Royale. It was under these circumstances that the Isle Royale Land Company Limited was organized. Jacob Houghton became one of the largest individual stockholders in the company, as well as its chief engineer. 28

Even though state-of-the-art-technology was applied and two years and thousands of man-hours spent were spent, Houghton's explorations failed to yield any indication of copper in paying quantities. 29 During this same time his partners, who had named their business the Wendigo Copper Company, built a dock and headquarters complex at the head of Washington Harbor at the southern end of Isle Royale, and named it Ghyllbank. The town was little more than a large log office building and several sheds and storehouses. The Wendigo settlement that extended two miles east to the site of the copper diggings was more elaborate. The majority of the 135 people who stayed on Isle Royale over the winter of 1890-1891 lived at Wendigo in small log homes and bunkhouses. 30 A safe, successful frontier base was established, but economic prosperity was proved elusive.

Jacob Houghton's tests with diamond drill bores did not produce any indication of profitable amounts of copper, and revealed instead that the amygdaloid belts were not as heavily mineralized as the company had hoped. As a result, the company shifted focus to the area along the Minong Ridge between Washington and Todd Harbors, but by this time Houghton had lost credibility with his investor-partners.

By June of 1892 the Isle Royale Land Company Limited began to reduce their work crews on Isle Royale. The English investors had grown tired of making large investments without good return. In October 1892 the operations were suspended completely, and Jacob Houghton looked for new investors. In 1896 he invested his own funds, but the failure of the Duluth bank ruined his

30 Ibid., citing Engineering and Mining Journal, October 10, 1891; Ontonagon Herald, May 30, October 10, December 19, 1891; Portage Lake Mining Gazette, December 3, 1891.
Figure 1.3. The town of Ghyllbank at Wendigo, which included a large log office, store houses, and log cabins. Fisher collection photo, ca. 1892. Photo and caption from Rakestraw’s *Historic Mining on Isle Royale*, 16.
Figure 1.4. Tobogganing at Ghyllbank at Washington Harbor in 1892. There were more than a dozen children at the Wendigo Copper Company’s operations, most living two miles up Washington Creek at the townsite of Wendigo. The large building in the background is the main office for the Wendigo Copper Company. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 30.
Figure 1.5. Richard and Alice O’Neil in front of what is likely their cabin at the townsite of Wendigo, about two miles northeast of Ghyllbank. This was one of several cabins and boardinghouses provided by the Wendigo Copper Company for mine workers and their families. Photo taken ca. 1889-1892. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 31.
attempts. Houghton still insisted on the existence of “first class” copper deposits on Isle Royale as late as 1899, although no deposits would ever materialize.31

“This ends the last attempt to find a mine on Isle Royale,” the Engineering and Mining Journal observed. “It is probable that a million dollars has been spent on this island in fruitless explorations, made by practical men with their own money...It may safely be said that there are no paying deposits on the island.”32

The last mining era on Isle Royale had ended. With this closure, however, the focus shifted to the profitable qualities of Isle Royale as a wilderness resort paradise. The Isle Royale Land Corporation began to market their extensive holdings for vacation homes and resorts. Likewise, former miner John F. Johns started a resort on Barnum Island in 1894, and by 1902 several well-to-do Duluth businessmen had purchased the old Wendigo Copper Company buildings at Ghyllbank, and converted them into the exclusive Washington Club.

Due to the elusive mineral deposits and extreme isolation, Isle Royale consistently failed to yield paying mining ventures. However, this industrial failure protected the island from the extreme environmental pressures of an active mining industry, the differences of which can be seen when comparing the island and the Keweenaw.

31 Karamanski, et al., citing Jacob Houghton to the chairman and directors of the Wendigo Copper Company Ltd., October 10, 1892 in Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Ontonagon Herald, November 12, 1892; William P. Scott to Herman Freund, May 25, 1892, correspondence of William P. Scott, M.D., Michigan Technological University Archives, Houghton, MI; Lane, “Geological Report on Isle Royale,” 44.
32 Rakestraw, Historic Mines of Isle Royale, 16.
INTRODUCTION
Few structural elements remain from the 19th century mining period on Isle Royale. The integrity of most structures relating to the historic mining era on Isle Royale is low due to the advanced state of degradation of the buildings. However, as archeological sites, several historic mining properties have ruins and landscape characteristics which remain intact, such as building ruins, old railroad and road grades, and poor rock piles.

Historically, a number of sites were related to historic mining on Isle Royale. These included the Chicago & Isle Royale, Ghyllbank, Wendigo Mine & Settlement, Island Mine (1874-78), Pittsburgh & Isle Royale (1847-53), Minong Mine (1875-83), Amygdaloid & Isle Royale (two sites), American Mining, Exploring & Manufacturing Co., Duncan’s Location, Scoville Mine, Smithwick Mine, Siskowit Mine (1847-55), Ransom townsite and the Isle Royale & Ohio Mine, Isle Royale & Ohio, Saginaw Mine (1875-79), Lucky Bay Mine, Epidote Mine, and the Datolite Mine. Additionally, Daisy Farm, the grave sites on Cemetery Island, and the Rock Harbor and Isle Royale Lighthouses also were related to the historic mining activity on Isle Royale. Only five of these properties retain structures representational of Isle Royale mining operations: the Minong Mine District, the Island Mine site, the cemetery on Cemetery Island, and the two lighthouses. The Minong Mine Historic District and the Rock Harbor Lighthouse were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1977, and the Isle Royale Lighthouse was nominated in 1980.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLE ROYALE MINING PROPERTIES
The Minong Mine provides a good example of what typically existed at Isle Royale mining locations. Mining operations began at the Minong Mine in 1875, during the second wave of mining activity on Isle Royale. Initiated by Detroit businessmen, the Minong Mine was heavily financed, and was the largest and most significant mine in Isle Royale history. A log dam was constructed to provide a water reservoir in order to operate a steam-powered stamp mill. Other development, including a dock, a warehouse, and a wagon road and cog railroad that ran between the dock and warehouse and the mines were constructed to transport the copper ore to lake steamers traveling to the mainland. The Minong Mine had the village of Cove constructed at the mouth of McCargoe Cove, where dwellings for mine workers and their families were built. Other village buildings included a store and an office building. Many of the structures were constructed of logs cut from the surrounding areas, as was common practice on Isle Royale.

Currently, the Minong Mine District is considered an archeological site, and most of the remaining structures are in ruin. The district retains several structures and landscape features, including what
Figure 1.6. Generalized site map of Minong Mine operation. Drawing by Toni Carrell. National Park Service files.
was either an old wagon road or a railroad grade, the ruins of a blacksmith shop, and remnants of the log dam. Full cedar logs and some lap-jointed log sections remain, although a beaver dam built on top caused it to break in 1974, and only a nine-log section remains. A more detailed description and history of the Minong Mine District can be found in the National Register Nomination.

The historic integrity of the Minong Mine District is low, as compared to its original appearance. However, because few structures remain from the period of historic mining, those that do take on new significance. For example, because of the transient nature of the mining ventures, it is unusual to find such good remaining examples of cemetery grave sites, such as those that survive on Cemetery Island.

With this "adjusted" criteria rating in mind, it is important to consider the significance of two additional sites within Isle Royale National Park, the Island Mine and the Cemetery on Cemetery Island. Both of these sites retain some representative artifacts of the second period of historic mining on Isle Royale. Comparatively, these two properties have high degrees of integrity, and will be featured in this discussion. More information about the integrity of these properties may be revealed in a cultural landscape inventory, which would put more emphasis on the landscape characteristics of the sites, rather than on the structures.

Typical Isle Royale copper mining operations included an office building, warehouse, store, dwellings for the miners, a powder house (which would have been located a safe distance from dwellings and mining operations so that explosives could be safely stored), a well, a tram or railway grade, a blacksmith shop, and possibly a steam-powered stamp mill. Stamp mills were sited near a reservoir, that may have been created by a log dam. Roads connecting the mine with other areas would have been constructed to link operations with the residential village areas. Mining equipment, such as ore cars, would have been on site. A warehouse would have been located near a dock or wharf, which would have been supported by log or rock cribbing. As in the Minong Mine location, a cog railroad may have been constructed to enable copper ore to be transported from the mine site to the warehouse and dock for shipping.

Buildings were constructed of both indigenous and imported materials. For example, one section of the Siskowit Mining Company building that may have served as an office, bunkhouse, and storage area was of log construction, while a larger, later addition was frame construction with clapboard siding. Construction materials were often salvaged from abandoned sites.
and reused by mining companies. The windows from the deserted Rock Harbor Light were “borrowed” by the Siskowit Mine to “fix up” the mining office. In an 1868 photograph of the Siskowit Mine office, some 4-light windows can be seen.) Mines were often located at sites previously used by other peoples, such as the American Fur Company, and often at sites that had previously been worked by prehistoric Native Americans. The Siskowit Mine site was previously one of the main bases of the American Fur Company fishing operations on Isle Royale. Structures were usually simple in design, side-gabled and often two-story. Powder houses were often built of native stone. Structures that remained after mining ventures folded were often reused by subsequent ventures, by commercial fishermen, or by sportsmen as shelter during island visits.

**Best Surviving Examples of Mining Properties on Isle Royale**

**Island Mine at Siskiwit Bay**

**Period:** 1873 - 1875

Like the Minong Mine, the Island Mine location is related to the second historic mining period on Isle Royale, and was one of the major ventures initiated by the profitable Quincy Mining Company in Hancock, Michigan. The Island Mining Company operated the Island Mine at this site between 1873 and 1875, and its prosperity resulted in the establishment of a small town, the Island’s most densely populated village. Only three structures remain in the form of ruins: a well, a powder house ruin, and an old tramway grade. All the structures contribute to the period of significance, and the overall integrity of the site is given a medium rating. Only the well (no Structure #) remains in good condition, and receives high ratings for integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship. The Well has only a medium degree of association and feeling, due to the lack of other mining remnants and artifacts.

The powder house (#U-42) was built in 1874-1875 of native sandstone using irregular coursing masonry method, and is currently in fair condition as a ruin. This structure was given high ratings of integrity of location, setting, materials, and workmanship, but only medium in design, association, and feeling.

The powder house was the most substantial structure built by the mining company. The building is 40’ x 20'8", and the roof has collapsed, but portions of four walls remained standing in 1994. The north wall is in fair condition, is 12’ tall, and has the building’s only door. The original cast iron frame lies in the doorway (door

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Figure 1.7. The Island Mine Area. Map drawing from National Park Service List of Classified Structures file.
Figure 1.8. Island Mine powder house ruin, stone detail.
was extant in 1960s). The mortar is in poor condition, and has fallen out of the joints in many places, leaching out its binder. Some larger joints were filled with small rocks as part of construction. The building has large corner stones. The interior walls consist of a rough, untooled mortar finishing.

The Island Mine tramway grade is visible, although no trackage is extant. It has high integrity of location and setting, but rates only medium in association and feeling, and has low integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The tramway is a 4' wide, elevated grade. The trackage was steel rail and oak tie, and ran northeast from the ore shafts, roughly 1200 yards to the edge of a 40' precipice. The Tramway runs parallel to the trail, and has rail and oak sleepers.

SIGNIFICANCE
Although many of the original structures are no longer extant, the Island Mine is significant as one of the last two remaining mine locations on Isle Royale.

Cemetery on Cemetery Island
Period: 1851-1854
A cemetery remains on Cemetery Island, with graves that date between 1851 and 1854. The cemetery is believed to be associated with the operations at the Siskowit Mine, during the first wave of mining ventures on Isle Royale, although some graves may be of passengers who died in the wreck of the Algoma, in 1885.

The site maintains high integrity in all areas except for association, which is medium due to the absence of other representational mining structures. The graveyard consists of nine marked, and partially marked graves. Grave #3 has a headboard that reads: "In Memory of William Hanks of Coventry who departed this life on September 11, 1851, Age 24." The inscription is cut into wood, and the gravesite is surrounded by a picket fence consisting of both rounded and lancet beveled post tops.

Grave #4 is marked with a reconstructed wood cross, and was looted in 1991. It is surrounded with a rock border. Grave #5 contains two graves: the grave on the left has a headboard that reads: "In memory of Infant Daughter of Maurice and Johanna Mickey, Died October 20, 1854." The grave on the right has a headboard that reads: "Erected in memory of Jeremiah Colbert of Bonmahon, County Waterford, Ireland. Died October 18, 1854, aged 25 years." The headboards are constructed of curvilinear board, and the two graves are surrounded by a picket fence consisting of square posts and plain landscape pickets.
Graves #6 and #8 have wooden crosses marking the gravesites, and are surrounded by a picket fence, with landscape pickets and beveled post tops.

The gravesite markers have been painted white, with inscriptions painted in black. One cross and headboard were extant in 1960. Picket fences were installed by the National Park Service in the 1950s to commemorate the sites, and individual pickets were repaired/replaced in the early 1960s.

SIGNIFICANCE
The Cemetery on Cemetery Island is significant as one of the last remaining gravesites relating to the earliest historic mining period on Isle Royale.

Figure 1.9. Cemetery Island site map. Drawing by Toni Carrell. National Park Service files.

Figure 1.10. Plan drawing of historic cemetery, Cemetery Island. National Park Service files.
Figure 2.1. Map of Isle Royale Lighthouses and Shipwrecks, from Gale and Gale, 34.
PERIOD: LATE 1830S - 1930S

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION NUMBERS:
The navigation and maritime history of Isle Royale has been addressed in National Register nominations for shipwrecks and lighthouses. In 1984, the ten shipwrecks which remain in Isle Royale waters were found eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Extensive histories and descriptions of these vessels can be found in the Thematic Group Nomination for the Shipwrecks of Isle Royale, and include the Algoma (#84001699), the America (#84001708), the Chester A Congdon (#84001716), the Cumberland (#84001732), the Emperor (#84001748), the George C. Cox (#84001749), the Glenlyon (#84001750), the Henry Chisolm (#84001752), the Kamloops (#84001769), and the Monarch (#84001779).

Navigational themes have also been addressed in National Register nominations for the Rock Harbor Lighthouse (#77000154, March 8, 1977), the Passage Island Lighthouse (which is completed but not yet submitted), and the Thematic Resources Nomination for United States Coast Guard Lighthouse and Light Stations on the Great Lakes, which was submitted in 1980, and include the Isle Royale Lighthouse and the Rock of Ages Lighthouse. Currently, the Passage Island Lighthouse is the only Isle Royale lighthouse not yet been nominated to the National Register.

OVERVIEW
Navigational and maritime history at Isle Royale is closely linked with the island's commercial copper mining, commercial fishing, and tourism industries, as well as with the broader commercial development of Lake Superior. As testimony to the island's maritime history, four lighthouses remain within the Isle Royale archipelago—two built in response to the island's intermittent copper mining boom periods, and two constructed as navigational aids for the burgeoning Lake Superior commercial traffic. Ten ships, wrecked between 1877 and 1947, lie in the depths of Lake Superior around the Isle Royale, further attesting to the once frequent traffic that visited, or passed within close proximity, to the rocky shores of the archipelago.

EARLY ISLE ROYALE LAKE TRAFFIC
Native American copper hunters were probably the first navigators to risk the dangerous Lake Superior waters in order to travel to Isle Royale. The Indians most likely used the birch bark canoe, which was strong and versatile. During the 1600s, European-American missionaries, traders, and explorers who ventured to Isle Royale also used the canoe. The famous route just north of Isle Royale, the "Voyageurs Highway," was traveled by many canoes carrying trade goods from Mackinac or Montreal to get to Grand Portage.

Between the 1770s and the 1820s, furs were transported by the Northwest Company from Grand Portage (and later, Fort William) to Sault Sainte Marie in sailing ships. It was not until 1837 when the American Fur Company opened fishing posts on Isle Royale
that the first large vessels and regular boat service came to the island. The American Fur Company had fishing operations at several sites on Isle Royale, with major warehouses at Siskiwit Bay and Rock Harbor. These warehouses were visited by company-owned schooners that delivered supplies to the island, and transported fish to Sault Sainte Marie. After the Isle Royale American Fur Company fisheries closed in 1839, the island would not be frequented by large sailing ships until the first copper mining rush in 1843.

**ISEE ROYALE'S FIRST MINING BOOM: 1843-1855**

The discovery of iron ore and copper in Michigan's Upper Peninsula in the 1840s played an important role in linking Lake Superior to the lower Lakes. Surveyor Douglass Houghton's 1841 legislative report had revealed the existence of copper deposits in the Keweenaw Peninsula and on Isle Royale, inciting Isle Royale's first copper mining boom in 1843. For the first time since the close of the American Fur Company fisheries, large vessels began to visit the island's harbors. Rock Harbor became a busy place during this period, as ships brought mining equipment, supplies, and mail to the island, and transported copper cargo to the lower lakes. The island's first lighthouse was constructed to guide ships through the shoal- and island-filled Middle Islands Passage, and into Rock Harbor.

The location for the **Rock Harbor Lighthouse** was selected in 1847 by a branch of the Treasury department. Due to the prolific copper mining traffic in the Rock Harbor area, the location chosen for the lighthouse was just off the Middle Islands Passage, which led into Rock Harbor. The Rock Harbor Lighthouse was completed in 1855, and survives as one of the oldest on the Great Lakes. Ironically, by the time the lighthouse was built, many of the copper mining ventures had folded, and the need for the Rock Harbor Lighthouse was greatly diminished. The light was operated until 1859, and then abandoned.

**COMPLETION OF THE SAULT LOCKS IN 1855**

The copper and iron ore mining ventures in Michigan's Upper Peninsula also served as a catalyst for the opening of the Sault Sainte Marie lock system in Michigan in 1855. Lake Superior was the last of the Great Lakes to be opened to direct access via connecting waterways. Before the opening of the locks, Lake Superior had no direct water connection with the lower Lakes, and the portage at Sault St. Marie was a navigational deterrent.

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1 Gale and Gale, 33.
3 Gale and Gale, 33-34.
Figure 2.2. The Rock Harbor Lighthouse at Middle Islands Passage, built in 1855, was the first of four Isle Royale lighthouses. Photo from Gale and Gale, 32-33.
The construction of the canal at Sault Sainte Marie, together with the appearance of steamboats, greatly improved the connection between the remote Lake Superior frontier and the more industrialized and developed cities in the east. After the canal was opened, regular shipping routes were scheduled through Lake Superior from large cities such as Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, and Detroit, further advancing transportation and communication on the Upper Great Lakes. Harbor facilities were developed at new urban centers on Lake Superior, such as Duluth.5

SECOND MINING BOOM ON ISLE ROYALE: 1873-1881
The second copper mining boom on Isle Royale began in 1873, once again bringing ships into Isle Royale's rocky harbors. This wave of mining ventures incited the creation of the island's second lighthouse, the Isle Royale Lighthouse. The Isle Royale Lighthouse was sited on Menagerie Island at the entrance to Siskiwit Bay, where the profitable Island Mine Company was located. Authorization was given for the new lighthouse in order to light the passage into the bay, which had a dangerous access. It was completed by 1875. In addition to guiding ships into the harbor, the Isle Royale Lighthouse also warned Lake Superior traffic of the existence of the island's south shore.6

In 1874 the government reactivated the Rock Harbor Lighthouse as a result of the renewed interest in copper mining on the island. Lake traffic had increased in 1873 at the southwestern end of the island with the activity at the Island Mine location, and in 1877 the Saginaw Mine generated a need for navigational aid just down shore of the lighthouse. However, after the two companies closed in 1878 and 1879, respectively, the Rock Harbor Lighthouse was abandoned once again.7

GROWTH OF SHIPPING AND COMMERCE IN THE 1880s
After the close of the second copper mining rush on Isle Royale in 1881, it was Canada's silver mining boom, as well as the growth of scheduled passenger and freight routes between the lower lakes and Houghton, Port Arthur, and Duluth, that created an increase in Lake Superior's, and Isle Royale's traffic. The discovery of silver in Silver Islet on the Canadian north shore initiated a rush to the area. Ships coming from the Sault Sainte Marie locks would traverse Lake Superior and "thread the needle"

Figure 2.3. Isle Royale Lighthouse on Menagerie Island, built in 1875. Photo ca. 1911, from Gale and Gale, 36.
between Isle Royale’s Passage Island and Blake Point, the most eastern point of the main island, to reach Silver Islet. Many shipwrecks occurred in this three-and-a-quarter-mile strait, and as early as 1872 it had been recognized as a very hazardous passage.

To help ensure the safety of ships, and their cargoes and passengers, the U.S. Lighthouse Board had appealed for funds to build Isle Royale’s third lighthouse on Passage Island in 1871. However, the appropriation for $18,000 was not forthcoming until 1875, despite repeated requests. With the appropriation came the stipulation that funds were not to be expended until the Dominion of Canada agreed to appropriate funds for a lighthouse on Colchester Reef, at the western end of Lake Erie. No construction was initiated on the Passage Island Light until 1880, when Canadians began constructing the Colchester Reef Lighthouse. The structure at Passage Island was completed in 1882.  

Ironically, the Silver Islet mine was flooded and closed less than two years after the Passage Island Lighthouse was put into operation.

Although Canada’s silver mining boom ended shortly after the Passage Island Lighthouse was constructed, the Canadian grain trade was emerging, and a consistent number of ships continued to travel the same route. Today, the Passage Island Lighthouse is the northernmost American light on the Great Lakes, and has played an integral role in the commercial and industrial development of Isle Royale and the port of Thunder Bay, Ontario. The Passage Island Lighthouse continues today, after over a century of service, as one of the most important lights on Lake Superior.

COMMERCIAL FISHING AND TOURISM: 1880s - LATE 1920s

The number of steam ships in Lake Superior tripled between 1880 and 1885. Because they were fast and reliable, steamers were able to schedule regular routes that linked Houghton, Duluth, Port Arthur, as well as Isle Royale with the lower lake. As a result of the increased Lake Superior commerce, Isle Royale’s commercial fishing and tourism industries began to grow and prosper in the early 1880s and 1890s, respectively. The Duluth-based A. Booth and Company began large-scale fishing operations on Isle Royale, providing independent island fishermen with regular shipping to larger markets. Company owned ships offered both cargo and passenger transportation.

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8 Gale and Gale, 38.
9 Thom Holden, 10; in National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Passage Island Lighthouse, Isle Royale National Park (n.d.), section 8, 3.
11 Gale and Gale, 34.
Figure 2.4. Passage Island Lighthouse on Passage Island, built 1882. Photo from Gale and Gale, 38.
service to island fishermen and vacationers, enabling both the fishing and resort industries to thrive from the late 1800s, until the late 1920s.

The increase in lake commercial traffic between the lakehead cities of Duluth and Fort William/Port Arthur, as well as to the lower lakes prompted the proposal for Isle Royale’s fourth lighthouse in 1895. The **Rock of Ages Light** was built at the western end of the island on a rock that is little more than two hundred feet long. The cost to build on such an inaccessible site apparently delayed the construction, and work was not started until 1907. The lighthouse was completed the following year.\(^\text{13}\)

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\(^{12}\) Gale and Gale, 34-35.

The End of a Booming Shipping and Passenger Transport Era

Shipping to Isle Royale would diminish in the late 1920s, affecting both the fishing and tourism industries. The development of the automobile, completion of the Minnesota north shore highway, and the Depression all cut into the passenger and package freight business which came to a virtual halt on Lake Superior by the 1930s. Trends were changing with the availability of automobiles, and by the 1920s, even families of moderate income could afford to buy cars. Vacations by car instead of by rail or boat became increasingly popular and affordable. Also, by 1925, the north shore road from Duluth to Port Arthur had been completed, providing the first practical alternative to passenger transportation via the Great Lakes. These combined factors had a large impact on the Isle Royale resort industry. The fishing industries on the island continued, although shipping and transport to market became more difficult for fishermen as lake traffic diminished. One big blow to both the fishing and tourism industries came with the sinking of the America, one of regularly scheduled ships owned by the A. Booth Company. The sinking of America represented the end of the golden era for fishing and tourism industries on the island. Purchased in 1902 to compete with Isle Royale resort owner Walter Singer’s Iroquois on the run from Duluth to Port Arthur and Isle Royale, the America made two and three trips each week with resort passengers, mail, freight, and fish collected from hundreds of commercial fishermen on Minnesota’s North Shore and Isle Royale. The America sank at the southwestern end of Isle Royale in 1928, where it remains today.15

Without the reliable and consistently scheduled America, crossing to the island became much more difficult. Other shipping companies made an attempt to fill the gap during the 1930s and into the 1940s, but with the growth of ground transportation in the Great Lakes area, the financial incentives to provide passenger and package freight services in Lake Superior waned. Lake passenger transportation to Isle Royale continues to hold an important niche in the island’s recreation industry. Isle Royale remains reliant on transportation services offered by three ferry services that transport tourists and hikers to the island from ports at Houghton and Copper Harbor on the Keweenaw Peninsula, and from the North Shore at Grand Portage, Minnesota. Tangible evidence of Isle Royale’s navigation and maritime history remain in the four lighthouses, and ten shipwrecks that lie beneath Lake Superior’s surface around the island.

15 Gale and Gale, 35.
INTRODUCTION
The navigation and maritime history of Isle Royale can be seen in several well-preserved structures in the landscape, as well as under the surface of Lake Superior. The lighthouses and shipwrecks listed below are well documented and have a high degree of integrity.

There are ten shipwrecks at Isle Royale National Park that have been listed on the National Register. These include the Algoma, America, Henry Chisholm, Chester A. Congdon, George M. Cox, Cumberland, Emperor, Glenlyon, Kamloops, and the Monarch. Because these have been previously listed, they will not be featured in this discussion.

Four historic lighthouses lie within park boundaries. Rock Harbor Lighthouse (1855), a National Register-listed building, is owned and maintained by the park. Three additional lighthouses -- the Passage Island Lighthouse (1882), the Rock of Ages Light (1908), and the Isle Royale Light (1875) at Menagerie Island are owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. Both the Rock of Ages and the Isle Royale Light were listed on the National Register in the late 1970s through a Thematic Resource Nomination. The nomination for the Passage Island Lighthouse has been written, but not yet submitted for evaluation. Because it has not yet been listed, the Passage Island Lighthouse will be the focus of discussion.

GREAT LAKES LIGHTHOUSE DESIGN
"Great Lakes lighthouse design evolved gradually during the nineteenth century, with considerable variations between harbor and coast lights. The most common design before 1870 consisted of a frame or brick keeper's dwelling, with the light exhibited in a lantern mounted either directly atop the dwelling or on an attached square tower standing twenty-five to forty feet tall. This was not a universal design, however. Where taller towers were required, usually for coastal lights, conical masonry (usually brick) structures were built, normally connected to the Keeper's House by an enclosed passageway. There were also a few large skeletal iron towers built during this era, such as the one built in 1861 on Manitou Island in Lake Michigan. Initially there were considerable variations in lantern designs, including the widespread use of the "birdcage" lanterns, but by the 1870s the

17 Unless otherwise noted, the information in this section has been taken directly from Charles K. Hyde, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, "United States Coast Guard Lighthouses and Light Stations on the Great Lakes," 1979, 2-4.
polygonal lantern, usually with eight or ten sides, had become nearly universal on the Lakes."

"There were also significant changes in illuminants and lenses prior to 1870. At the beginning of the century sperm oil was the principal illuminant, but as the sperm population declined, rapeseed oil was substituted. Immediately after the Civil War, oil became the standard source of light. The lenses used in lighthouses were a more important and controversial matter. The U.S. government adopted the Argand lamp and parabolic reflector system for its lighthouses after purchasing the patent rights from Captain Winslow Lewis in 1812. The French physicist Augustus Fresnel developed a radically different and superior lens in 1822, incorporating a series of glass prisms surrounding the light source in a beehive configuration. A central prism magnified the light while prisms above and below refracted light to yield a single powerful beam.

"Lighthouse design evolved in several distinct directions after the Civil War. Beginning in the 1870s harbor lights were moved from the mainland onto the piers and breakwaters that were being built, necessitating a change in their design. Pier lights, while still manned, no longer included a residence, which was typically located on shore. Simple wooden or skeletal iron structures sufficed for pier lights. Few of these have survived, because numerous pier extensions and the destructive effects of storms and ice shortened their lives. During the first two decades of this century virtually all the harbor lights were replaced with steel-framed structures encased in cast iron or steel plates. Beginning in the mid-1920s the unenclosed skeletal steel tower or post with an exposed lens lantern became the dominant form."

"Coastal and island lights requiring tall light towers evolved more slowly. With a few exceptions, the conical brick tower was the typical design used before 1900. Individual towers one hundred feet tall, requiring massive walls were not uncommon, although there were also significant examples of skeletal steel towers. After the turn of the century there were few tall towers built, and these all utilized steel frames."

"The greatest challenge faced by lighthouse designers in the period between 1870-1910 was the construction of light stations on isolated islands, reefs, and shoals. The Lighthouse Establishment had its own staff of engineers attached to the three Great Lakes districts and these were usually men with experience as military engineers. When a proposed lighthouse presented particularly difficult engineering problems, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would assign additional personnel to work on the project. They became expert in the design and
CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLE ROYALE LIGHTHOUSES

Most lighthouses can be categorized by construction method, shape, building material, or foundation types. The major construction types of historic lighthouses are wooden, masonry, wave-swept, concrete, cast-iron plate, skeletal, straightpile, screwpile, diskpile, crib, caisson, and Texas tower.18 Of the four Isle Royale lighthouses, three are masonry: the earliest, the Rock Harbor Lighthouse (1855) is brick, and the two consecutive lights, the Isle Royale Light (1875) and the Passage Island Light (1882) are both rubble stone masonry. The Rock of Ages Light (1908) is concrete construction. Masonry was the most popular lighthouse construction material for lighthouse towers, and half as many stone towers survive than brick today. Concrete towers began to replace brick masonry towers at the beginning of the 20th century. The first reinforced concrete tower in the United States—the 115' tall Point Arena Lighthouse in California—was built in 1908, the same year that the Rock of Ages Light was constructed. At least 46 concrete lighthouse towers exist today.19

Lighthouses can also be classified as terrestrial or aquatic (constructed onshore or offshore). Lighthouses were built on land, in the water, on islands, on top of ledges and cliffs, on breakwaters and piers, on caissons, and a few on fort walls. Most lighthouses are land based, as are all four of the Isle Royale lighthouse stations.

Two of the early Isle Royale lighthouses, the Rock Harbor Lighthouse and the Isle Royale Light, were associated with the periods of historic mining on the island and were typically sited to aid the navigation of ships into the island's rocky harbors. The Rock of Ages Light, constructed in response to the increase in commercial lake traffic that existed between the lakehead cities of Duluth and Fort William/Port Arthur, as well as to the lower lakes, is built on a small rock off the westernmost end of the island. The Passage Lighthouse was completed in 1882, was the northernmost American lighthouse on the Great Lakes, and is currently the most important light in the Isle Royale archipelago, lighting the ship lane that leads into Thunder Bay, one of the busiest ports on the Great Lakes.

Some light towers are stand-alone structures, while others are attached or integral to the keeper's quarters or fog signal building. In addition to a light tower, a land-based light station could consist of a keeper's quarters, oil house, fog signal building, workshop,
cisterns, privy, landing wharf, boathouse and ways, barn, roads, walks, and fences."

BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLE OF ISLE ROYALE LIGHTHOUSE

Passage Island Lighthouse

Period: 1882

"As a satellite island to the Isle Royale archipelago, Passage Island is separated from the main island by three and a quarter miles. The lighthouse is situated on the southwestern end of Passage Island, on a rocky point swept bare of vegetation. The lighthouse is a 44-foot octagonal stone tower attached to a one-and-a-half story stone dwelling. There is also a wood-clapboard fog signal house, a wood-clapboard outhouse, a wood frame pump house, and a concrete-block oil storage shed. A steel tramway links the fog signal house with a concrete boat dock, and a cascading step walkway connects the dwelling with the pump house. The residence/tower building is good structural condition, although inside there has been much alteration."

The lighthouse's 44-foot octagonal tower has an 11 foot square base and is highlighted by painted sloped set-offs. The foundation, structures, arches, and sills are built of coursed rubble stone. The tower is attached to the dwelling at the northwest corner. A front gable roof with overhanging eaves, wood brackets, and other wood detailing covers the keeper’s dwelling. Only the trim is painted white. The main (west) elevation is fitted with a wood door in the furthest bay north. Six-over-six pane, double-hung sash windows with segmental arches are evenly spaced on the upper story. An interior end chimney is located on the east facade at the rear of the buildings. There is a shed-roofed, coursed rubble stone addition on the rear of the building."

The coursed rubble stone tower is topped by an octagonal beacon with a domical cast iron roof. A polygonal cast-iron gallery surrounds the beacon, which originally housed a fourth order Fresnel lens that was mounted on a brass clockwork pedestal (the lens has been replaced, and the original is on display in the new United States Coast Guard Portage Station in Dollar Bay). An exterior catwalk surrounds the beacon. Passageway to the tower is by a circular cast-iron staircase that has no railing. There are two landings and a lantern floor, and massive swinging iron doors that can seal off the tower form the dwelling. The keeper’s dwelling is composed of seven rooms and a basement.

"In 1910, outbuildings included a privy, hen house, and workshop—all painted white. Today there are four remaining outbuildings. The largest is the 40’ by 28’ fog signal building covered with painted wooden siding. It has a gable roof topped by a gabled
cupola, though originally it was punctuated with two smoke stacks to vent the steam engine powering the fog signal. A garage-like shipping door--on the northeast gable end of the building--provides a maximum entrance way. Thirty feet northwest of the lighthouse are two smaller outbuildings: a hip-roofed, concrete-block storage house (12' by 8') and a wooden weatherboard-sided gable-roofed outhouse (10' by 7'). Ninety feet southwest of the fog signal building is a (10' by 8') concrete foundation, frame pump house. A steel-rail tramway begins at the dock and runs north, northeast up a steep incline 170 feet to a steel turntable. The tramway then turns south from the turntable to the fog signal building. All these structures and objects are contributing elements to the site."

"There are three intrusive, non-contributing elements, however. 14 feet south of the dwelling is a large, steel "I" beam mounted solar panel erected in 1989. While it is a non-contributing element the solar panel produces electricity to turn the automated light still functioning as an aid to navigation. Twenty-two feet northwest of the lighthouse is a steel radio tower, approximately eighty feet high. Approximately 80 yards east of the lighthouse is another intrusion, a helicopter landing pad. Its treated lumber deck, landing markings, and steel "I" beam supports encroach upon the historical integrity of the site."

"The lighthouse was temporarily fitted with a fixed red light, with an oil-burning wick lamp. In 1885, a steam fog bell was installed. By 1897 a flashing white light was in place. The light was electrified in 1928, while the keeper's dwelling remained heated with coal until 1958. Passage Island Light was fully automated in 1980, and today the lighthouse continues as an important, though automated, Great Lakes navigational aid."
Figure 2.6. Passage Island map with location of light house, radio tower, boat house, dock, and remains of U.S. Coast Guard double-ender. National Park Service files.

Figure 2.7. Passage Island Lighthouse and radio tower, view looking southwest, ca. 1930s - 1940s. National Park Service photo.
Figure 3.1. Map of Isle Royale fisheries, from Gale and Gale, 24.
COMMERCIAL FISHING
HISTORIC CONTEXT #3

PERIODS: 1837-1839; 1840s-1880s; 1880s - late 1920s; late
1920s-1950s

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION NUMBERS
Edison Fishery; March 8th, 1977 (#77000152)

OVERVIEW
Commercial fishing has been the most consistently practiced and
long-lived industry on Isle Royale. The development of
commercial fishing on Lake Superior coincided with the growth of
the fur trade, and by the close of the eighteenth century, British
firms like the North West Fur Company and the Hudson’s Bay
Company were fishing near Isle Royale in order to supply their
Lake Superior trading posts with fish.1 In 1833 the American Fur
Company began large-scale fishing operations on Lake Superior,
and in 1837 these operations were extended to Isle Royale,
which became one of the company’s most productive fishing
centers. These enterprises on Isle Royale were short-lived,
however, and in 1839 the American Fur Company discontinued
its operations on the island.

Despite the closing of the American Fur Company fisheries, the
fishing industry continued to grow on Isle Royale, as technological
advances continued to improve area transportation and shipping
facilities. The appearance of steam boats, and the construction
of the canal at Sault Sainte Marie in 1855 combined to improve
the link between the remote Lake Superior frontier and the
developed centers of the east. New urban centers with harbor
facilities, such as Duluth, were emerging, and the appearance
and rapid extension of railroads between 1865 and 1895 further
stimulated the communities of the Upper Great Lakes. The
advent of refrigeration enabled Isle Royale fishermen to ship their
catch fresh, stimulating an increased demand for their abundant
supplies of trout and whitefish.

1 Karamanski, et al., citing A. H. Lawrie and J. F. Rabrer, Lake Superior
A Case History of the Lake and its Fisheries in Great Lakes Fishery
Commission Technical Report 19 (Ann Arbor, 1973), 29-30; Lawrence
Rakestraw, “Post Columbian History of Isle Royale: Part I,” typescript
(1967), 2, Michigan Technical University Archives and Manuscripts,
Houghton, Michigan. Rakestraw notes that in 1965, archaeologist Tyler
Bastian located what he described as a mid-18th century season trading
post near Brady Point; Peter Oikarinen, Island Folk: The People of Isle
Royale (Houghton, Michigan, 1979), marks pre-1800 Northwest Fur
Company stations at Indian Point at the mouth of McCargoe Cove and
on Amygdaloid Island; Alfred C. Lane, “Geological Report on Isle
Royale,” Michigan Geological Survey vol. 6, Pt. 1 (Lansing, 1893), 3
notes the location of a Hudson’s Bay Company fishing station on
Section 24 Town 64 N Range 37 W near Hay Bay; Charles C. Adams
An Ecological Survey of Isle Royale, Lake Superior: A Report from the
University of Michigan Museum (Lansing, 1909), 389-390 substantiated
the Hay Bay sites association with the Hudson’s Bay Company; for
general background on native Americans and fishing see Charles E.
Cleland, “The Inland Shore Fishery of the Northern Great Lakes: Its
Development and Importance in Pre-history, American Antiquity 47, (4)
(1982), 766.
Isle Royale’s fishing boom occurred between the 1880s and the late 1920s, peaking between 1915 and 1925. By the late 1920s, about 75 families—more than 200 people—ran seasonally-based commercial fisheries on Isle Royale. The fishing boom was spurred by technological advances, which brought gas boats, new equipment, materials, and techniques, as well as refrigerated rail cars and abundant shipping opportunities to the isolated Isle Royale fishermen.

Taking advantage of the increased transportation opportunities to the island and the rising popularity of the “wilderness resort,” many Isle Royale commercial fishermen initiated tourism on the island. By the 1890s, a number of them were supplementing their fishing incomes by renting rooms in their homes and providing guide services to vacationing sports fishermen. Some Isle Royale fishermen even built additional cabins on their properties, creating rustic “resorts,” to take advantage of the increasing opportunities the tourism industry offered at the turn of the century.

The decline of commercial fishing on Isle Royale was brought on by a number of factors. The Great Depression, together with increased limits set by the National Park Service, served to dampen the profitability of commercial fisheries during the early 1930s. Overfishing, regulation, introduction of invasive predator species, and a decrease in Great Lakes shipping also contributed to the decline of the commercial fishing industry on Isle Royale. The fishing industry on Isle Royale was virtually defunct by the late 1950s.

American Fur Company Fisheries on Isle Royale: 1837-1839
Commercial fishing began at Isle Royale in the wake of the fur trade. During the 1820s and 30s, the depletion of fur bearing animals in the Lake Superior region had prompted fur traders to search for other sources of revenue. In 1833 the American Fur Company, the nation’s first transcontinental business, launched a large-scale commercial fishing enterprise for trout and whitefish on Lake Superior. The company planned to maximize profits by providing their own shipping, and would replace the long canoe and the Mackinaw boat with large load capacity schooners. High fish prices in 1836 and rumors of excellent fishing at Isle Royale

2 Gale and Gale, 63.

3 Karamanski, et al., citing Lucius Lyon to Garred Burritt, 11 November 1822, Michigan Historical Collections, 27, (Lansing, 1897), 437-8; Anna Jameson, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada (N.Y., 1839), 77.

encouraged the expansion of the American Fur company's fishing operations, and company agents requested that another vessel be dispatched to Isle Royale.\(^5\)

In October 1837, the company founded its main depot at Checker Point in Siskiwit Bay on Isle Royale. Cabins were built, and two more schooners were commissioned to improve supply lines and communication with the island. The company spread out to six more fishing stations on Isle Royale, at Belle Isle, Merritt's Island, Duncan Bay, Hay Bay, Rock Harbor, and Card Point at Washington Harbor. By 1839, the Checker Point depot had a barrack, cooper shop, warehouse, salt storage shed, fish house, and a clerk's dwelling.\(^6\)

In 1839 the American Fur Company's Isle Royale fisheries employed 33 men, not including the Indian women who were hired to clean fish. The company operation employed coopers, onshore female workers, a clerk, voyageurs, and "free-men" fishermen. A number of small sailing craft were active in Siskiwit Bay alone. Each vessel caught 85 to 125 barrels of fish per season, and packing and barrel making could not keep up with fish harvesting. The company improved the docking facilities at Rock Harbor so as to accommodate large vessels.\(^7\)

Several problems plagued the success of the American Fur Company's Isle Royale fisheries, however. Just as the island's operations were being established, the economic panic of 1837 caused fish prices to plummet. Salt shipments necessary for preserving and curing fish for transport were irregular, Isle Royale's white pines (which were used for building barrels for shipping) were quickly being depleted, and shipments of barrel staves were irregular.\(^8\) The markets in the South, East, and in the Mississippi Valley could not absorb the supply of fish produced. The parent company was also experiencing financial problems due to the waning popularity of beaver hats. In the fall of 1839, the company reorganized operations, and pulled workers and their families off of the Isle Royale stations. The years 1840 and

\(^5\) Ibid., citing Franchere to William Brewster, 30 July 1836, \textit{ibid.}; Franchere to Lyman M. Warren, 2 August 1836.

\(^6\) Ibid., citing Franchere, "Journal of His Voyage in the Brewster," 7-8.

\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^8\) Ibid., citing Franchere to Crooks, 10 August 1937 and Warren to Crooks, 13 September 1937, American Fur Co. papers.
1841 were very difficult for the American Fur Company, and in 1842 the company failed completely.\(^9\)

**GROWTH OF THE ISLE ROYALE FISHING INDUSTRY: 1840s - 1880s**

Even though the American Fur Company failed, Isle Royale maintained its reputation for good fishery resources. As the Lake Superior country was being inundated with miners and settlers in the mid-1840s, seasonal, small-scale fishing operations continued on or around Isle Royale. The American Fur Company's Checker Point Camp in Siskiwit Bay was reoccupied by independent fishermen by 1846.\(^{10}\) Small mining outposts on the mainland such as Copper Harbor, which had grown into economic centers during the copper mining boom of the 1840s, created a new, localized market for Isle Royale fishermen.

\(^9\) Ibid., citing Charles Borup to Crooks, 12 July 1941, American Fur Co. papers and Nute, “American Fur Company Fishing Enterprise,” 497-498. Few traces of this first fishing frontier at Isle Royale remain. Only subtle archeological evidence remains, marking the foundations or hummock covered remains of American Fur Company buildings. At Checker Point, archeological investigation identified the outlines of buildings and hearths, but turned up surprisingly little other material evidence of the American Fur Company’s tenure on Isle Royale.


During this period Isle Royale was being promoted as an important location for commercial fishing in guide books, government reports, and other exploration literature. Surveyor Douglass Houghton promoted Isle Royale’s value as a fishing ground in his 1841 legislative report on the mineral resources of the Upper Peninsula, in which he praised Lake Superior's fish as "better flavored" and worthy of higher prices than those from other places.\(^{11}\)

The federal government also served, inadvertently, to promote commercial fishery development in Lake Superior country. Federal officials had assisted the earlier mining ventures by persuading the Ojibway to relinquish their title to Upper Michigan and northern Wisconsin land.\(^{12}\) The influx of miners caused an increase in Lake Superior shipping traffic as the need to transport freight and copper ore grew. New sailing vessels joined the modern steam-powered ships, commercial trade routes were


\(^{12}\) Ibid., citing Institute for Development of Indian Law, Treaties and Agreements of the Chippewa Indians (Washington, D.C., 1974), 78-82.
added to the Sault, and later, to other regions. This increased lake traffic provided better opportunities for commercial fishermen to market their goods.13

The expansion of the western frontier in the 1850s opened a new, larger market for Isle Royale whitefish, trout, and siscowet.14 During this period Lake Superior had hundreds of commercial fishery operations, and in 1853 the lake’s fish exports were an estimated 800,000 pounds.15 Between 1847 and 1870, the number of Isle Royale’s seasonal fishermen remained close to thirty, increasing when large groups of Ojibwa made fishing expeditions to the island from Grand Portage and Thunder Bay.16

Technological advances, especially in the form of improved transportation facilities, benefited Isle Royale fisheries during the 1850s. One important advancement came in 1855 with the construction of the canal that joined Lake Superior with the lower Great Lakes at Sault Sainte Marie. This new connection between the remote Lake Superior frontier and the larger eastern cities, together with the increased efficiency of steamboats, opened up new markets for Isle Royale fish. After the canal opened, regular shipping routes were scheduled through Lake Superior from major cities such as Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, and Detroit. Duluth and other new urban centers developed harbor facilities, creating additional destinations for Lake Superior shipping traffic.

**LIFEWAYS AND MATERIAL CULTURE OF ISLE ROYALE FISHERMEN**

Commercial fishing on Isle Royale continued to develop between the 1850s and the fishing boom of the 1880s. Isle Royale fisheries were operated seasonally, during which fishermen worked long, arduous hours, and lived simple lives. Their fishing operations, and their lives were at the mercy of Lake Superior storms. Structures were simple, built out of materials that were inexpensive and found at hand, such as logs, salvaged lumber from shipwrecks, or buildings and materials salvaged from other sites and structures. The fishermen had a “make-do” construction ethic. The structures essential to the fishery operation included a fish house and dock, net house, and storage building. Related fishery operation equipment included Mackinaw boats, Gill and pound nets, and net drying reels.

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16 Ibid., citing William Ives, Isle Royale Survey, 20 July 1848, General Land Office, copy of the survey at Isle Royale National Park, Mott Island and Rakestraw, “Post Columbian History of Isle Royale, Part II: Fisheries” 38-40.
Most commercial fishermen lived seasonally on Isle Royale, returning to the island from the mainland in the spring as soon as lake conditions permitted boat travel. Fishermen needed to arrive on the island early enough, around mid-April, so that sufficient ice could be saved to preserve fish throughout the summer. Ice would be cut from the lake, or would be made in container, and then packed in sawdust (and stored in an ice house or other structure) in order to save it over the summer. Ice was very important to the fishermen, as they depended on it to keep their fish fresh. Many Isle Royale fishermen came from cities and towns in Minnesota, such as Duluth, Knife River, Two Harbors, Grand Marais, and Hovland. Children would remain on the mainland in school, and would arrive on Isle Royale at the end of the school year with the fishermen's wives. When on the island, children helped with the chores of the fishery, and as they got older, assisted the family fishing business in the boats, making fish boxes, oiling cedar net floats, and helping with other tasks.

The individual land ownership patterns of Isle Royale fishermen differed. Some owned the sites they had homesteaded or purchased from government agencies, but some owed mainland property, and just "squatted" on company or public land on Isle Royale. Many did not feel it was necessary to acquire title to fishery lands in which few people were interested. The location of fishermen's homes was critical. A good location would be one proxemic to favored fishing grounds, local docks, or accessible beaches. The best sites would also be near sheltered waters, in areas with favorable winds. Favorite locations were reoccupied when families would move away. Some fishing operations were passed down from one generation to another, and others grew as families inter-married.

Bachelor fishermen usually had the most modest dwellings. Most staples and supplies were purchased, but occasionally cows and chickens were brought from the mainland. Some vegetables were grown, and flower gardens were often planted. Fish

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18 Gale and Gale, 77.
Figure 3.2. Families tended both flower and vegetable gardens, though beavers and mink sometimes reaped the benefits. Potatoes and rhubarb were common, as were lettuce patches. Nellie Johnson of Rock Harbor, Mike Johnson's wife, kept this flower garden facing south behind the house in this photo, ca. 1920. There are still colonies of imported flowers, including iris, sweet william, and forget-me-not, that grow where fishing family homes once stood. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 80-81.
COMMERCIAL FISHING
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Figure 3.3. Lake trout, displayed in front of a fish house at Rock Harbor in the early 1900s. The fish barrels were used to pack and transport fish, preserved with salt. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 60.

houses were common, and were used for stowing gear and ice. They usually had a "dress" bench for cleaning fish. The garage-like fish houses were built to extend over the water so that the day's catch could be kept cool, and so that the boats could be loaded and unloaded efficiently.

The entire family would help clean, pack, and store the fish. Entrails would be dumped into "gut bays" away from the fishery to prevent contaminating the drinking water. Salt fish were coated with salt and put into barrels. The fishing companies on the mainland began using electric refrigerators in the 1920s, but before that, ice was cut from Lake Superior and was a precious commodity. Fishermen at Washington Harbor built an ice house that was used communally.21

Mackinaw Boats
Fishing on Isle Royale was typically conducted in small boats. Throughout the 19th century the double ended Mackinaw boat was the most used watercraft in the island fisheries. Before the 1880s and the advent of the steam-powered fishing tugs, Mackinaws and other small boats had been predominant in Isle Royale commercial fisheries. Generally 18 to 30-feet long, Mackinaw boats had either a sharp or "rounded" stern, and were powered by either sail or by oar. Because they had a shallow draft and removable centerboard, they ran well in both shallow and deep waters, and were a stable and safe craft, even in the unpredictable Lake Superior weather. By 1880 the Mackinaw boat had become a specialized fishing vessel. Many had compartments for ice storage to keep the catch fresh, and a "pit" amid ship for the crewmen to work.

21 Ibid., citing Howard Sivertson Interview, 29 August 1980, Cochrane Tape.
Gill Nets
The Isle Royale commercial fishermen and other Lake Superior fishermen often used gill nets, the mainstay net used on Isle Royale and Lake Superior. Adaptable in shallow or deep water, gill nets functioned like an underwater “fence.” Fish would become caught in the mesh; the fishes' girth prevented them from swimming through the mesh, and their gills stopped them from escaping backwards. The depth and location of the nets, as well as the size of the mesh opening, determined the size of fish caught. The nets were most effective if fish could not see them and thus, not avoid them; the more "invisible" the netting, the better the performance.

A typical gill net ran roughly 200-300 feet. Two or three gill nets composed a “box.” Island fishermen typically worked two men to a boat, handling 10,000 feet of nets a day during good weather. Gill nets were set for trout during the late summer and in the peak fishing season, which ran from August through November.

Much of the gill net fisherman's equipment was made by hand. Nets were made of linen and hand-tied. Fishermen carved their own buoys and "corks" from cedar, and then rubbed warm linseed oil on the corks to preserve and seal them. Lead sinkers were made in the hand forge, which was a necessity in a fishery operation. The nets would be dried on "net drying reels" to prevent them from rotting, and were then stored in net houses.23 A large number of net drying reels at a fishery signified a large gill net operation.

23 Ibid., citing Holte, Ingeborg's Isle Royale, 13; Howard Sivertson Interview, Cochrane Tape.
Figure 3.5. The Mattson fishery in Tobin Harbor, ca. 1891. The number of net drying reels shows that this was a large gill net fishery. There were several fishermen in Tobin Harbor, including Louis Mattson Sr., who fished from Tobin Harbor beginning in the 1890s. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 71.
Pound Nets
By 1875, pound nets were also being used on Isle Royale by innovative fishermen who could afford them. Initially introduced from Scotland in 1836, pound nets were first used on Lake Ontario. Their use rapidly spread to the other Great Lakes: Lake Erie in 1850, Lake Huron in 1854, Lake Michigan in 1856, and were introduced on Lake Superior in the 1870s, around L'Anse. While pound nets gave tremendous impetus to the commercial fishing industry, they also ultimately hastened its decline.

Pound nets (pronounced “pond,” and often spelled “pond”) were set in the shape of a box held in place by 25' to 50' long stakes; a bottom net and four side nets created the trap. A large net was then run from this container out perpendicular to the shoreline. Fish were directed by the long net into a small opening in the pound net. The fishermen gently lifted the bottom of the pound net up the stakes, putting excess net into the boat, and then

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26 Ibid., citing Howard and Moore, 2.
scooped the catch into the boat.27 Pound net fishing would begin in the spring, after the breakup of the ice.

The pound nets themselves were expensive, and required the use of specialized equipment such as stake drivers and flat decked boats. The operation of driving the stakes into the lake bottom to secure the net required a pound net boat, a stake driver, and 40 to 60 stakes. These stakes would be driven into soft-bottomed bays with a stake driver, or "scow," which looked something like a small oil derrick. The "scow" consisted of a central tower floated on a platform which centered and steadied the stake, while above it, a pulley held a heavy wooden hammer which pounded the stake into the lake bottom. This task was performed with man-power in early days; later, the hammer was powered by gasoline engines.28

Figure 3.7. A view from Barnum Island, ca. 1930, looking across to Washington Island. The tall structure is a scow, which was used to drive pound net stakes into the lake bottom. Pound nets were used at several locations during the 1800s, including Siskiwit Bay and outside McCargoe Cove. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 69.

27 Gale and Gale, 69.
Pound nets were used at three locations in Siskiwit Bay by 1879. Captain Robert L. Francis of Duluth had the biggest pound net operation on Isle Royale, operating first at Francis Point, Wauswaugoning Bay (outside of Grand Portage), Siskiwit Bay in 1888, and finally at Birch Island in McCargoe Cove. He sold his fishery in 1926, of which nothing is left of today. The use of pound nets decreased on Isle Royale after the turn of the century, due to the expense and maintenance requirements.

Critical to the growth of commercial fishing stations on Isle Royale were the Duluth-based fish wholesalers. Duluth fish wholesalers aggressively pursued the business of the Isle Royale fishermen, and were instrumental in the expansion of commercial fishing on the island. Although the companies charged costly shipping fees, they provided a consistent market, supplies, some mail delivery services, passenger accommodations, and eventually tours of the island. As shipping and transportation opportunities continued to grow on Lake Superior, so did the profitability of commercial fishing operations.

**ISLE ROYALE FISHING BOOM YEARS: 1880s - LATE 1920s**

During the mid-1880s the Lake Superior fishing industry experienced an unprecedented expansion. The number of fish steamers shipping in Lake Superior tripled between 1880 and 1885, and the number of small fishing craft quadrupled during this period. In 1885, over 4.5 million pounds of whitefish, just

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32 Gale and Gale, 62.

under 1.5 million pounds of lake trout, and over 3 hundred thousand pounds of herring were harvested from Lake Superior. The Gulf States commercial fishing operations were rivaled in size and scale by the Great Lakes fisheries.\textsuperscript{34}

The growth of commerce between 1880 and late 1920s on Lake Superior brought a "golden age" for the Isle Royale commercial fisherman.\textsuperscript{35} This boom occurred in tandem with several other regional occurrences. The post-Civil War expansion of railroad lines connected the remote north country with larger areas of commerce. Technological advances in refrigeration, boat and engine technology, power-driven net lifters, and netting materials (i.e. cotton and nylon) all improved the ability of commercial fishermen to bring in large catches. Changes in market preferences for fish, lack of government regulation, as well as a general increase in Lake Superior shipping opportunities were also important factors in the growth of the fishing industry on Lake Superior, and Isle Royale.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{A. Booth Company and Scandinavian Immigrants at Isle Royale}

The involvement of large-scale companies such as the A. Booth Company, which began fishery operations on Isle Royale and the influx of Scandinavian immigrants to the island also boosted the Isle Royale fishing industry. The Booth Company established a fishery in Washington Harbor in 1886, and provided consistent shipping on the large-capacity, company-owned \textit{America} vessel, creating a broader and more consistent market for the isolated Isle Royale fishermen. Additionally, the influx of Scandinavian immigrants to the island in the mid-1880s brought new fishing technologies to Isle Royale fishermen—technologies that lengthened the fishing season—and also served to help populate the island. By 1894, there were approximately 100 men operating 40 boats on Isle Royale. The fishing boom on Isle Royale peaked between 1915 and 1925, when there were about 75 families—more than 200 people—running seasonal commercial fisheries on the island.\textsuperscript{37}


\textsuperscript{37} Gale and Gale, 63.
Figure 3.8. Booth Island, Washington Harbor, ca. 1932. The Booth fisheries built a warehouse here in the early 1890s. Several families lived in cabins on the small island. A boardinghouse accommodated the bachelor fishermen. H. Christiansen & Sons bought the Booth properties following the loss of the *America* in 1928 and continued to use the island until the 1940s. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 65.
The Booth Company was based in Chicago but operated out of Duluth, and integrated the Isle Royale fishing industry with the Chicago wholesale distribution market. For the first time since the American Fur Company’s fishing operations, Isle Royale was connected with the national market scene. The Booth steamer services also led to tourism and resort development on the island. Two Booth Company vessels had passenger accommodations, and provided passage for sports fishermen to Isle Royale. By 1902 the Booth steamer America drew much of the North Shore and Isle Royale trade, offering relatively sophisticated travel accommodations on board.

Booth and Company’s mass marketing capabilities played a major role in the Lake Superior and Isle Royale fishing boom, as did the tremendous influx of Scandinavian immigrants. Up until 1885 the ethnic makeup of Isle Royale was a diverse population of German, Irish, English, French-Canadian, Chippewa, and American people; by the 1890s, the majority of Isle Royale fishermen were Scandinavians. The Booth Company took advantage of the new immigrant workforce, and extended credit, or “staked” the immigrant fishermen. The company purchased Booth Island in Washington Harbor in order to house its new workforce of Scandinavians.

Washington Harbor was largely Scandinavian, and by the early twentieth century it had become a relatively large fishing settlement of about 20 families. Some of the Scandinavians in Washington Harbor included Brunvall, Bjorlin, Eckel, Ekmark, Elligson, Gill, Hanson, Koss, Lind, Miller, Nichiason, Sivertson, Skadberg, Smuland, Torgerson, and Wick. Some fishermen were bachelors, and fished for the Booth Company, or hired on with an established Isle Royale fishermen for a few years. Many stayed and raised families on the island, however. Andrew Sivertson had fished in the Apostle Islands area during the 1880s, and moved to Isle Royale by 1892. His fishery was passed on to Art and Stanley Sivertson, and is currently operated under a Special Use Permit by Stanley’s wife, Clara, and their son, Stuart.


40 Ibid., “Enticing Island,” 86.

41 Gale and Gale, 62.
Other Scandinavian groups established small-scale fisheries in sheltered isolated bays or harbors, at Birch Island, Amygdaloid Island, Fish Island (currently known as Belle Isle), Johnson Island, at Tobin Harbor, Rock Harbor, Chippewa Harbor, Wright Island, Fisherman's Home, Long Point, Hay Bay, and Green Island in Todd Harbor. In Hay Bay, the Scandinavian fishermen included Kvalvick, Bjorvek, Sivert Anderson, and Skadberg. Although in November some Scandinavians emulated their predecessors and returned for the winter to Minnesota and Michigan, many brought canoes and enjoyed overwintering on the island.42

Booth Company maintained tight control of workers by dealing in supplies, rather than cash, and rarely were fisherman able to get ahead.43 Fishermen were put at further disadvantage because the wholesalers controlled the transportation, and could set high shipping prices.

42 Gale and Gale, 62.
Figure 3.10. Godfrey Vodrey, who came to Isle Royale as a miner in the 1870s, started fishing in the 1880s and wintered in Chippewa Harbor, shown here in 1896. He later became a fish inspector for the Booth Company. Sam Johnson also fished here. Later his nephew Holger Johnson fished here from about the 1910s until the mid-1950s. Holger and his wife, Lucy, operated a resort and store during the 1930s. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 86.

Figure 3.11. Wright Island Fishery, ca. 1950s. National Park Service photo, from Rakestraw’s Commercial Fishing on Isle Royale 1800-1967.
Figure 3.12. Fisherman’s Home, also known as Seglem’s Harbor, ca. 1929. The harbor was home to several fisheries, including the Seglem family in the early part of the century, and later Sam and Elaine Rude. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 88.
Hookline Fishing

With the influx of Scandinavians came a new fishing technique: hook-line fishing. The hook-line fishing technique was labor intensive, but good for fishing lake trout in the spring, which allowed fishermen to more productively overwinter on Isle Royale. Hooklines were used in the late spring to mid-summer, in tandem with small gill nets, which were used to catch herring for use as "bait" fish. The technique involved stringing a 1,600 foot long main line, parallel to, but just below the surface of the water, anchored at each end. At intervals of 40 feet, a line with a large weighted snell hook that was baited with herring would be let out 100 to 200 feet. Often several main lines would be strung together, sometimes lengths that stretched three to five miles. The hooklines could hold 400 baited hooks, and would bring in 200 pounds of fish per day on average.

After the 1880s, steam powered fishing tugs supplemented the Mackinaw boats, and were used primarily to bring supplies to the island fishermen in exchange for transporting fish to market. The fishing tugs were known as "gill net steamers," because they utilized long "gangs" of gill nets. Because they were fast, the gill

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net steamers were more reliable in uncertain weather. They were manned by crews of two or three, and allowed fishing to continue throughout the season. The steam-powered ships would come to Isle Royale at the height of the fish harvest between late August and November, creating a more efficient and productive work schedule. However, even though the fishing tugs could operate farther from home, the Isle Royale fishermen continued to use their small, maneuverable Mackinaw boats for fishing in the rocky waters.

During the Lake Superior fishing boom, there were signs of alarm. The rising numbers and efficiency of Great Lakes fishermen coupled with industrial development in the Lake States affected fish habitat and populations. After 1891, whitefish no longer held its place as the leading food fish export of Lake Superior, or any Great Lake, and populations had begun to decline in Lake Superior by 1893. Investigators believed that organic and chemical pollutants, stream dams, and resource processing wastes--mainly resulting from Great Lakes States' lumber production--harmed the inshore spawning grounds of whitefish and diminished natural food sources. After an exhaustive study, federal investigators concluded that fishing practices "brought about by the manipulation of traps and pounds and by the absence of any restriction upon the season or methods of the fishery" would further damage the Great Lakes whitefish populations.47

Overfishing was not a problem on Isle Royale, however. Due to the smaller scale and intensity of the fishing operations, there was not much industrial pollution on or around the island. High market prices and the cost of shipping also kept the islands fish resources from being depleted.48

Fish Propagation
Regardless of the abundance of fish in Isle Royale waters, due to the decreasing fish populations in the Great Lakes, U.S. Fish

48 Ibid., citing Private communication with Asa Wright, 23 May 1989, Fishery Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Lansing; Michigan private communication with Don Swedberg and Charles Bronte, 13 August 1989, aboard the R/V Siscowet, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rock Harbor, Isle Royale; and interview with Stanley Sivertson, 10 July 1980, aboard the Wenonah, Windigo Ranger Station, Isle Royale.
Commissioners recommended “proper regulation of the fishery and systematic and rational methods of propagation.” European fish culture propagation methods were utilized, and new fish species were introduced into the Great Lakes in order to invigorate additional sources of “food, revenue, and sporting potential.”

The stocking of whitefish in the Great Lakes had begun much earlier, in the 1870s. Later, in 1883, the state of Michigan planted 47 million whitefish (approximately 4 million in Lake Superior). In two years the fish population had doubled, and federal officials began large-scale shipping to distant regions. A fish hatchery was established on the north side of Duluth during 1886, and lake trout eggs were collected from Isle Royale that year.

In 1895, the fish commission, with the help of Isle Royale fishermen, collected over 2.7 million eggs at Todd Harbor, Fish Island, Rock Harbor, and Washington Harbor. These propagation efforts continued into the twentieth century, and between 1916 and 1940, 81 million trout “fry” and 31 million whitefish “fry” were propagated and put back into the Isle Royale waters. However, Lake Superior whitefish populations continued to decrease, and in 1895 were surpassed by herring as the number one export.

Despite overfishing and fish scarcity problems, the multi-million dollar Lake Superior fishing industry continued to grow into the twentieth century. Gasoline engines continued to improve and become more affordable by the turn of the century, and were becoming more specialized for marine application. Gas engines improved fishermen’s circumstances, allowing them to operate farther from port, and interact more easily with other fisherman at

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distant locations. The engines also automated the fishermen's net lifting apparatus, allowing the use of greater lengths of net. Sailing craft were adapted for motor power, enabling hook lines to be set farther off shore, and allowing fishing in the spring and early summer.\(^{55}\) During the first decade of the twentieth century, the reliable "hot head" engine (locally called the "Norwegian engine") which made use of an exterior gas burner to ignite internal combustibles, appeared on Isle Royale fishing boats. On Isle Royale, in many cases the Mackinaw sailboat had been replaced by the gas boat by 1910.\(^{56}\) All these technological advances improved the production of the Isle Royale fisherman.

The motorization of small boats also boosted the sports fishing industry on Isle Royale, which had been popular since 1866. Many commercial fishermen served as guides for visiting sports fishermen, taking them to remote fishing grounds. Many fishermen spurred the growth of the resort industry on Isle Royale by operating small "resorts" out of their homes during the summer months, and added cottages, docks, and boathouses to their fishing compounds. They also supplemented their incomes by repairing boats, and provided guide services for the island visitors at the resorts during slow fishing periods.\(^{58}\) Gust Mattson was one of the first. About 1900 Mattson began offering his services as a guide, and rented small tent-cabins to vacationing sportsmen. Several other island fishermen created rustic resorts to supplement their incomes. For example, Erick Johnson created the Tourist Home resort on what is currently known as Davidson Island, and Holger Johnson and his wife ran the Johnson Resort and Trading Post in Chippewa Harbor. As island tourism grew, other full service resort were created on Isle Royale, creating a small, localized fish market.

The 1920s brought the zenith of commercial fishing on Isle Royale. Fish harvests grew steadily, and local and national market connections were well established. Fishermen were able to extend their business through credit, and many commercial fisheries had been combined through marriage. A community network had developed on the island. Gas boats played a major role in the fishing industry, by enabling growth, mobility, and increased production.

**Notes:**

\(^{54}\) Ibid., citing Kaups, "Commercial Fishing 1849-1870," *Minnesota History*, 43.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., citing Howard Siverston Interview, 14 February 1980, Cochrane Tapes; Koelz, "Great Lakes Fishing," *Corn. of Fish. Rept. 1925*, 555-6.


\(^{58}\) Gale and Gale, 63.
The decade of 1915-1925 would see the largest fishing population on Isle Royale. During this period approximately 75 fishing families—about 200 people—operated commercial fisheries on the island.\(^\text{59}\) However, the 1920s also brought increased government regulation of lake fishing. Scientists were calling for regulations to control the number of fish caught before the populations were irrevocably decimated. In 1926 commercial fishing licensing in Michigan began, and Isle Royale fishermen were required to submit information about the size of their catch.\(^\text{60}\)

**COMMERCIAL FISHING DECLINE ON ISLE ROYALE: LATE 1920s - 1950s**

As technology improved commercial fishing operations, Isle Royale fishermen would experience many more productive years. However, the Great Depression of 1929 precipitated the decline of the commercial fishing industry on Lake Superior. Fish prices fluctuated drastically, creating uneven market conditions. At times the price to ship was higher than the price paid for the fish. As a result of the Crash, competition increased, and many fishermen left the business.

Advances in technology during the 1930s also increased fishing efficiency, and new techniques and equipment hastened the depletion of Lake fish. Manufactured cotton nets were used rather than hand tied linen, and later, nylon replaced cotton as a net material, reducing the amount of onshore work that needed to be done to maintain the nets.\(^\text{61}\) Aluminum, and then plastic corks replaced cedar. Improvements in nets, floats, and engines increased efficiency. Beach seines were used for fishing herring in shallow water, marine engines were improved and could haul greater amounts of catch, and most smaller herring skiffs had outboard motors.

Other factors worked against Isle Royale fisherman during this period. The introduction of smelt in the Great Lakes decimated the populations of lake trout and herring.\(^\text{62}\) Smelt had been released in Crystal Lake Michigan in 1906 as a food for sport fish, and appeared in Lake Superior in 1930. Additionally, the development of the highway system along the north shore of Lake Superior in the early 1920s caused a decrease in Lake

\(^{59}\) Ibid., 63.


\(^{61}\) Gale and Gale, 73.

traffic, making opportunities for Isle Royale fishermen to ship fish to market less available. As competition between shipping companies decreased, shippers were able to charge higher prices, which island fishermen had no choice but to pay. Additionally, sports fishermen added to an “anti-commercial” fishing attitude, and campaigned against the commercial fishermen, who they claimed were the cause of the depletion of lake fish.

Finally, further limitations were placed on fishery development with the initiation in 1931 of Isle Royale National Park. Because the National Park Service mission was to manage the island as a wilderness, many restrictions were put on commercial fishermen. For example, they could no longer use native materials for equipment, were restricted in some ways from maintaining equipment and structures. The National Park Service encouraged the donation or sale of property to the government. Fishermen could not transfer title to their holdings under National Park regulations, but some were offered leases, and even those who did not own their land were awarded life leases for their fisheries. However, the leases stipulated rigid restrictions, and could be revoked if violated.

With licensing, regulation, and the government’s insistent pressure to sell, Isle Royale fishermen had little incentive to keep their fisheries in operation. Many fishermen retired, leaving abandoned buildings, many of which were burned by the Park Service. In an effort to return the area to “wilderness,” in 1941 the National Park Service burned the Island House hotel, the Washington Harbor communal ice house, and the entire fishing enclave at Booth Island.64

In 1946, the year Isle Royale National Park was dedicated, the sea lamprey arrived, devastating native fish populations in Lake Superior. Within five years the lamprey had killed 90 percent of the trout in certain parts of the lake, creating an “economic disaster” for the Lake Superior fishing industry. The lamprey, smelt, and other introduced game fish affected the ecosystem of Lake Superior. The lake trout fishing industry was nearly dead by 1957, and by 1960 the lamprey had virtually wiped out the entire Lake Superior fishing industry.65

Due to the ever-increasing regulatory mandates, many fishermen left the island, retiring their businesses, and by 1966 there were only eight commercial fishermen left on Isle Royale. The state of Michigan closed Isle Royale trout fishing in 1960, and it remained closed until 1967, when limited "assessment" catches were allowed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources: Quota systems were enforced, limiting the size of fishermen's catch. In 1986 only three commercial fishery owners maintained their licenses: Myrtle Johnson (Milford Johnson's widow), at the Johnson fishery on Amygdaloid Island; Elaine Rude (Sam Rude's widow), at the former Fisherman's Home on Houghton Point; and Stanley Sivertson, in Washington Harbor. Anti-lamprey programs were implemented, and fish stocking increased along the mainland shores. In 1991, scientists concurred that both the lake trout and herring populations on Isle Royale showed signs of recovery. By this time, however, the commercial fishing industry had virtually ended on Isle Royale. Currently, only the Sivertsons retain a Special Use Permit, and fish the Isle Royale waters.

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67 Karamanski, et al., citing Minneapolis Star-Tribune, 30 September 1984; Lawne and Raher, Lake Superior Fishery, 33.
INTRODUCTION

Over 50 commercial fishing camps (including those operated by the American Fur Company and the A. Booth & Company) once existed on Isle Royale. Today, only ten survive, to greater or lesser degree. These include the Bangsund Fishery in Rock Harbor; the Holte Fishery on Wright Island; the Mattson Fishery in Tobin Harbor; the Andrew/Scotland Camp on Amygdaloid Island; the Anderson Fishery on Johnson Island; the Rude Fishery / Fisherman’s Home on Houghton Point; the Sivertson / Ekmark / Singer property at Washington Harbor; Milford and Myrtle Johnson’s fishery operation at the McGath Camp at Crystal Cove on Amygdaloid Island; a few of the early Johns’ structures at the Barnum Colony on Barnum Island in Washington Harbor; and the Edisen Fishery in Rock Harbor, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. Of the ten surviving properties, three maintain a high degree of historic integrity: the Edisen Fishery, the Rude Fishery / Fisherman’s Home, and the Sivertson / Ekmark / Singer property.

Three different types of commercial fishing operations existed on Isle Royale: large-scale operations, small-scale operations, and small-scale operations that also functioned as rustic resorts. Large-scale operations, of which none remain extant, were those run by large companies such as the American Fur Company and the A. Booth & Company. Small-scale commercial fishing operations were those operated by independent fishermen or families, and are the type that survives on Isle Royale today.

Several small-scale commercial fishing operations also functioned as rustic resorts, responding to the 20th century commercial success of Isle Royale tourism. In these cases, the commercial fishing families sought to supplement their income by letting rooms in their homes, or in small, auxiliary sleeping cabins they constructed for rental purposes. A number of commercial fisheries were operated in this manner, including Gus Mattson’s fish camp (which later grew to a large-scale resort), the Erick Johnson’s Tourist Home Resort, and Holger Johnson’s Resort and Trading Post in Chippewa Harbor. The only surviving example of this type of establishment on Isle Royale is the Holger Johnson property, which will be discussed in the “Resort and Recreational Development” section.

The practice of recycling and reuse at Isle Royale extended to abandoned fishing camps. In several instances, a fishing camp abandoned by one fisherman would be reoccupied by another individual who would use it for similar or recreational purposes. It was less common for a site with a previous use to be adapted for use as a commercial fishery. This was the case, however, with the Rock Harbor Lighthouse, and the McGath Compound at Crystal Cove. The Rock Harbor Lighthouse was briefly used as a
commercial fishery site between 1928-1939, and the McGath Compound, which was built as a private resort compound in the 1920s, was reused in the late 1950s as a fishery. The Rock Harbor Lighthouse was listed on the National Register under the theme of early mining and maritime development in 1977, and the McGath Compound will be discussed in the "Resort and Recreational Development" section.

Characteristics of Isle Royale Small-Scale Fisheries
The vernacular fishing camp structures on Isle Royale were built for expediency and need: they were built for seasonal, and utilitarian use. Fishermen either erected their own buildings, or occupied fishing complexes already in existence. Because the season at Isle Royale was short, and fishing time was at a premium, structures in the Isle Royale commercial fishery were designed and built to be easily moved and quickly assembled, and were often recycled and moved to new sites on different islands. Fishermen dismantled abandoned buildings at the old mining settlements, such as the Island Mine and the Minong Mine, and recycled the lumber for fishing structures. Some, such as the fish house at the Sivertson fishery, were salvaged from the abandoned CCC camps.

Early twentieth century commercial fishery buildings were commonly built using horizontal notched log construction, or simple frame construction. Frame structures were sided with minimal cladding such as horizontal or vertical board, droplap, or shiplap siding. These structures were often covered with tar paper or asphalt roll, which was used on all exterior surfaces, both walls and roofs. The buildings were not intended to provide shelter during the cold winter months, and were therefore not of substantial construction. It is possible that many of the more "urban" small storage sheds with droplap or shiplap siding and corner boards found at Isle Royale are from mail-order kits that could be easily shipped.

Most of the buildings were built using a variety of inexpensive materials, or those that were readily available on the island, such as drift wood, packing crates, and materials salvaged from shipwrecks. Logs were often salvaged from log dam breaks and used for wharves and fish houses.

Fishermen's residences were generally small, unornamented, and built on rock foundations, or directly on the ground. The fishermen's homes varied a great deal; some were the crude shacks of wood and tar paper, with a stove, homemade table,

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70 Rakestraw, "Isle Royale Fishing," 20.

72 Ibid.
bed and cupboards made of soap boxes and orange crates, decorated only with calendar art, and poorly maintained. Little money was available for elaborate structures, and bachelor fishermen usually had the most modest dwellings. Other fishermen’s residences, however, were set up as family homes, with good furniture, decorated with photographs and paintings, nets, or relics of shipwrecks. Wood burning stoves were universally used. Fishermen’s wives often had flower gardens, and abandoned fisheries often have overgrown flower beds with sweet william, delphinium, roses, phlox, and day lilies.73

Fishermen’s wives sometimes grew vegetable gardens, as well, in which potatoes, rhubarb, and lettuce were popular. Some fishermen kept cows and chickens they brought from the mainland, and had chicken coops or structures that served as animal shelters as part of the fishery complex.

Fisheries were sited in a clearing near the water’s edge of a sheltered bay, and contained a collection of modest-size, gabled, one-story buildings, including a residence for the family, privy, a fish processing structure (fish house), a dock suitable for small boats, one or more net/storage structures (net house), fish net drying racks or reels for drying and storing nets and lines, perhaps a boat winch, and a privy. Additional structures that survive at some of these sites include auxiliary living/sleeping quarters for hired help, store houses, tool sheds, and a small smoke house, or “smoker.”

The fishery’s seasonally-occupied family residence was typically a one-story building, only 600 square feet in size on average. Some were larger, such as the Mattson residence, which measures approximately 20′ x 39′. Sleeping cottages for hired help were considerably smaller, ranging from 8′ x 8′ to 10′ x 10′, judging from the size of the remaining cabins at the Edisen and Bangsund fisheries. The residential structures at Isle Royale fisheries show a marked similarity in the design of many of the gable-end entrances, with a central door and solitary flanking window.

The fishery’s three most important structures—the dock, fish house, and net storage house—were vital to fishing operations. Docks enabled easy access to the developed areas, served as impromptu work space, and provided mooring for boats. The docks were set on simple wood cribs filled with stone, were decked with board planks, and often skirted three sides of the fish house. Docks are usually among the first elements to disappear from the site due to the destructive winter ice-ups, and required frequent reconstruction. Fish houses were used for stowing gearing and ice, and were also used for processing fish. These

73 Karamanski, et al., citing Waldron, We Explore the Great Lakes, 102-3; Rakestraw, Commercial Fishing on Isle Royale, 21.
COMMERCIAL FISHING
ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

buildings ranged in size from 12'5" x 20' (Johnson fish house) to 20' x 46' (Sivertson fish house), and usually had a "dress" bench for cleaning fish. The "garage-like" fish houses were built to extend over the water, so that the day's catch could be kept cool, and so that the boats could be loaded and unloaded efficiently. Net houses were also important for storing the extensive nets, protecting them over the winter. Net houses were usually long, rectangular buildings, and the majority ranged in size from 12' x 14' (the Mattson net house, which is comparatively short) to 13' x 22' (Sivertson net house). The two largest surviving net houses at Isle Royale fisheries are the Eckmark net house, which measures approximately 22' x 24', and the Andrew Scotland net house, which is comparatively long and narrow, and measures 12' x 36'.

Another important structure at the Isle Royale fisheries was the ice house, of which none are known to survive on the island. Ice was an important commodity in the commercial fisheries, and was cut from the lake early in the spring and packed in sawdust to be kept cool until shipment. The lake ice was stored in ice houses, either private or communal. A communal ice house once existed in Washington Harbor, but was burned by the National Park Service during the early days of the park.

It is not known whether the smoke houses that remain at the Rude Fishery, the McGath Compound, and the Barnum Colony are related to the early fishery operations. The smoke houses that survive at these sites are small buildings, measuring only 2' x 3' to 4' x 5', and may have been built for personal use.

BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLES OF SMALL-SCALE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

EDISEN FISHERY, ROCK HARBOR
PERIOD: 1895 TO CA. 1930s
The Edisen Fishery has nine surviving historic structures, retains a high degree of integrity, and was determined eligible for the National Register in 1977 due to its being the best surviving example of a commercial fishery in continuous use at Isle Royale. As such, it provides a good basis for comparison, containing structures associated both with domestic use (houses, sleeping cabin, privy, garden, and chicken coop) and work (dock, net house, net drying reel, and dory). The structures and variety of fishing equipment in the complex illustrate the development of commercial fishing techniques on Lake Superior since the beginning of the twentieth century. The modest buildings, constructed and maintained largely with a variety of locally available materials, reflect the response to the need for shelter on the remote island, traditionally occupied only six months of the year.74

Rude Fishery / Fisherman's Home, Houghton Point

Period: Late 1800s (on 1910) - 1930s

The Rude Fishery / Fisherman's Home (hereafter called Rude Fishery), located on the southwest end of Isle Royale on Houghton Point, retains a high degree of historic integrity as a commercial fishery complex. The site contains a good collection of associated structures and objects, including a residence, fish house, net house, three help's quarters, privy, tool shed, store room, net drying reels, smoker, stone wall, and a sauna. All buildings retain a high degree of integrity, and are in good to fair condition. Since the 1890s, a number of commercial fishing operations existed in this very sheltered inlet, and the Rude fishery / Fisherman's Home complex served a large crew of seasonal fishermen. The site has been in continuous use as a commercial fishery since the 1890s. Sam and Elaine Rude moved to the Fisherman's Home site in 1937, and fished with Sam's father Andrew until 1944, when Sam took over the operation.

The Rude Fishery buildings are all vernacular, one-story, frame, gabled structures typical of the Isle Royale fisheries. Two of the residential buildings are one and one half units, with shed-roofed additions. Most of the buildings are sheathed in vertical board (some with battens), but many are covered with asphalt roll or building paper and held down with battens. Two distinctive design features of the structures include four panel doors are placed to left of center, on the gable ends, with a window unit placed somewhere to the right of the door. Some have small wood porches and rock steps at the entry. All roofs have shallow overhangs. Residential buildings range in size from 19' x 36' (Rude residence), to 12' x 16' and 20' x 24' (help's quarters), and are largely unornamented, although a few have screen doors with decorative details. The fish house measures 16' x 15', which is average for Isle Royale, and the net house measures 13' x 33', and is one of the largest on the island. Storage buildings range from 12' x 14' to 12' x 18'. Although several structures sit on dry-laid stone foundations, many sills rest directly on grade, and are deteriorating from rot.

A number of the Rude structures date to the late-1890s or 1910 (accounts of the actual construction date are conflicting). All of these early buildings retain high integrity in all areas and are in fair condition, and include two buildings which served as help's quarters (#225 and #227), a store room / laundry (#221), a tool shed (#224), and a net house (#226). The tool shed is believed to have been moved from another property in the harbor, the old Seglem fishery, an account which would support the late-1890s construction date. As such, it may be one of the oldest structures on the site. Author/folklorist Peter Oikarinen noted in 1979 that this building had the name “Seglem” scratched deeply in the gray
wood of the structure. The Fisherman's Home area was previously known as Seglem's Harbor, and was home to several fisheries during the early part of the century, including the Seglem family fishery. The buildings may have originally been used as a residence, and later moved from the Seglem property to be used by the Rudes as a tool shed.

The five early structures are similar in massing, materials, and design. They all have a similar roof pitch, and an entry door in the gable end, placed to the left of center. All but the store room / laundry and the net house have a window to the right of the door, although window types and placements are far from uniform. Window sizes and styles vary, ranging from six-over-six stationary units to one-over-one double-hung sash windows, which appear to be later additions.

At least three buildings were added in 1926 and 1927, perhaps to accommodate the expansion of the fishing operation during what would have been the peak of the island's commercial fishing industry. These included the Rude residence (#223), a third help's quarters (#222), and a fish house (#220). These are all one-story, gabled structures. Two of the residences, the Rude residence (#223) and the third help's quarters (#222), are both in fair condition, and are similar in form, massing, and detail. Both have shed roof additions built to the right of the original structures, and like the earlier buildings, have the entry door left of center in the gable end, with a window placed somewhere to the right. The two residential buildings both have linoleum and wood flooring, no utilities, and were heated by woodstove. Structure #222 is the most elaborate of the three help's quarters, and has two-light, four-light and six-light windows, a screened door with decorative spindles, and a wood porch with rough wood board trim. Its exterior was once painted green. This building has two rooms, as opposed to the three room Rude residence. The extra room in the Rude residence may relate to an account that a section of one of the smaller bedrooms of this building was created in 1946 from an old fishboat.

The third building constructed in the mid-1920s, the fish house (#220), is in fair condition. It is typical, one-story, gabled building with six-light windows, a Z-braced panel door, and rests on a log crib dock. The roof is rolled tar paper, which is also used over the horizontal board siding. The interior has plank flooring and a fish-cleaning table.

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75 Peter Oikarinen, Island Folk: The People of Isle Royale, 1979, 151.
76 Gale and Gale, 89.
78 Oikarinen, 151.
The sauna (#228) is in good condition, and is unlike the earlier structures in design and materials. It is a one-story structure with a shallow-pitched roof, and large overhanging eaves. The sauna was rebuilt in the 1950s after damaged by a tornado. According to Elaine Rude, "All that was left on the dock after that tornado was a bathtub and a stove. The whole sauna, the walls and everything, was gone." The sauna has two rooms, wood floors, a stove, benches, and a tub (with no hook-up). It sits on a crib dock, has plywood walls, rolled siding, and recycled windows.

The construction dates of the privy (#223A) and smoker (#224A) are not known. The "two-seater" privy is in good condition, has a shed roof, vertical board siding, and a vertical board door. The interior has a wood floor and platform, and a small fixed window. The smoker is in fair condition, and is one of only three remaining on the island. It is a small, shed-roofed structure approximately 4' tall, and has horizontal board and batten siding.

Other small-scale structures on the property include a dry-laid sandstone wall (#223B), and three reconstructed net drying reels (#220A). The sandstone wall is in fair condition, and is located to the west of the two residential buildings (#223 and #222). It is approximately 85' long, and serpentine in design. Elaine Rude laid the wall as a "fence" for the rock garden she created in the

yard. The three net drying reels are in good condition, and are made of wooden, vertical-pole supports that are set into old metal drums.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Along with the Edisen Fishery, the Rude Fishery has the highest historic integrity of all the remaining commercial fishery operations on Isle Royale. The structures and variety of fishing equipment in the complex depict late 19th and early 20th century commercial fishing techniques on Lake Superior. The modest buildings, constructed and maintained largely with a variety of locally available materials, reflect the response to the need for shelter on Isle Royale. The site is also illustrative of the way in which sites were reoccupied and reused.

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79 Oikarinen, 154-155.

80 Ibid., 151, 153.
Figure 3.14. Plan drawing of Rude Fishery/Fisherman's Home at Houghton Point. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
Rude Fishery, Houghton Point

Rude Fishery, Residence (#223).

Rude Fishery, Help's Quarters (#222).

Rude Fishery, overall site view.

Rude Fishery, overall view showing #221, #222, #223.
Rude Fishery Tool Shed (#224).

Rude Fishery Help's Quarters/Eckels Residence (#227).

Rude Fishery Help's Quarters (#225).

Rude Fishery Sauna (#228).
Rude Fishery Net House (#226).
Rude Fishery Fish House (#220).
Rude Fishery Net House (#226) and Smoke House (#224A).
Rude Fishery Store Room (#221).
Rude Fishery Net Drying Reels (#220A).

Rude Fishery stone walkway.
The Sivertson / Ekmark / Singer property on Washington Island has a complex history, and is associated with both the commercial fishing industry, and Isle Royale’s early 20th century resort development. A good collection of representational structure types survive on the site: two residences, two privies, a laundry, two net houses, two fish houses, and net drying reels. Collectively, the structures on the site retain a high degree of historic integrity, and are in good or fair condition.

The Sivertson / Ekmark / Singer property (hereafter called the Sivertson Fishery) contains cultural resources that relate to both the themes of commercial fishing and tourism, and illustrates the layering of history that was common to many of the best sites on the island. Some of the earliest buildings on Washington Island were built by Sam and Andrew Sivertson, who began fishing at Isle Royale in the early 1890s. The Sivertsons, of Norwegian descent, had first fished from the Apostle Islands. They obtained permission from John F. Johns to build on what is now Barnum Island, which John’s owned at the time. However, when Johns decided to open a tourist resort in 1892, the Sivertsons were asked to leave. Before they had arrived for the season, Johns moved the Sivertson’s buildings, boats, and equipment to the dock and claimed title to the island. This is how the Sivertsons moved their fishery to Washington Island. In addition to the Sivertson’s Fishery, the site is also associated with Einar Ekmark, a Scandinavian fisherman who lived in the Art Sivertson cottage until his death in 1986. Ekmark left his homeland of Sweden in 1929 when he was 24 and came to Minnesota. In 1943 came to Isle Royale with his brother Karl, and began fishing.

In 1902, Washington Island also became the site of the first resort at Isle Royale, established by Captain Walter Singer. Singer purchased a steamer to bring customers to his Washington Harbor resort, the Island House, and built additional vacation cabins and recreational buildings on his property. There are five structures that remain from Singer’s resort, which retain moderate integrity: two resort cabins (#186 and #192), two privies (#186A and #192A), a radio antenna, and a dock ruin. Although in close proximity to the Sivertson fishery, the two were operated separately, and the fishery survived much longer than the resort development. (The Sivertson Fishery is the last to remain in use on the island under a Special Use Permit.) The "honeymoon cottage" (#192) and associated privy (#192A) were later used in the Sivertson fishery operation, and will be discussed within this context. The remaining Singer resort structures will be discussed.

81 Lawrence Rakestraw, “Post Columbian History of Isle Royale: Part II; Fisheries,” Michigan Technological University, 1967. From Sivertson and Johns interview; Duluth News Tribune, 4/15/53.
COMMERCIAL FISHING
ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Surviving structures at the Sivertson Fishery are typical of a commercial Isle Royale fishery, and in addition to the necessary service buildings—fish houses, net houses, residence and docks, there is also a large collection of fishing equipment remaining on site, including nets, net buoys, fish boxes, boxes of floats, and "sticks," as well as gas barrels and boats. There is also a recycled CCC-era building which was moved from nearby Camp Windigo and re-used as a fish house (#198). This example of recycling and reusing structures is a traditional practice used by islanders in an attempt to circumvent the high cost of shipping construction materials to the islands. Buildings were frequently moved from one site to another for a new use, not only by fishermen, but also by resort owners and summer residents.

Like the Rude Fishery, the majority of structures are small, one-story, frame, gabled buildings with shallow roof overhangs and exposed rafter tails. The Sivertson Fishery buildings, however, exhibit more variety in siding and opening placement than the Rude Fishery. Many structures have the typical horizontal board siding covered with paper or asphalt roll and held down with battens. A few have drop lap siding, and in many cases, both walls and roof are covered with asphalt rolled sheathing or roofer's paper. Distinguishing design features on several structures include centrally-placed doors on gable-ends, with a window located immediately to the right. Additionally, many of the structures do not have ridge boards.

The two residences, the Sam Sivertson house (#200) and the Caretaker's cottage (#193), are distinguishable from the working structures in size, design, and materials. The two residences are similar in size, measuring approximately 40' x 12'/6" (#200 has a 15'-long addition to the rear), and 18' x 32', respectively. Both are covered in wood shingles, which may be a more contemporary material. (Because the fishery is still in operation, the Sivertson structures are more likely to exhibit contemporary repairs and materials.) The Sam Sivertson Residence was built in 1906, is a one-story, 'T' plan frame structure, is in good condition and has high integrity. The buildings has entries in the two gable ends, each with windows located to the side. Interior walls are unfinished, and the windows are six-light and six-over-six casement. Two roof skylights appear to be later addition. The three room Caretaker's cottage (#193) was built ca. 1920 and is also in good condition and has high integrity, except for its integrity of association. This structure has a deep, full-length front porch, which is not rare, but not the norm on Isle Royale fishery residences. It also has "Classical" detailing in the corner returns at the gable ends, creating a pedimented appearance. One pillar is
covered with shingles. The entrance is off-center, the windows are two-over-two, and there is an interior brick chimney.

The honeymoon cottage (#192), once used by the Singers for their resort, found new use as a residence for the Sivertson's fishing operations. Like the Caretaker's cottage, this building was also built ca. 1920, and is in good condition with high integrity. The one-story, frame building has a hipped roof and a full-facade recessed front porch. It retains the original decorative porch posts and roofing bargeboard, as well as its two-over-two double-hung windows. The original front door and screen also remain intact. The associated frame privy (#192A) is in poor condition and is lacking integrity.

The fishery's two net houses, the Sivertson net house (#199), and the Ekmark/Eckel net house (#195), were both built in 1906. The Sivertson net house was used as a residence by Art Sivertson in 1928, is in good condition and has high integrity. It is unlike the other residences in size and materials, and is a two-room frame structure that has walls and roof sheathed in rolled asphalt held in place with battens. The roof boards are from recycled materials: one piece bears the stencil "Sivertson Washington Island Isle Royale." The Ekmark Net House is in poor condition, but retains high integrity in all areas except materials, which have medium integrity. The building measures approximately 24' x 22', has shingles in the gable ends, and droplap siding. There are centrally-placed panel doors, two-over-two windows, and nets and boxes still inside.

The Sivertson's two fish houses—the Sivertson fish house (#198), and the Ekmark fish house (#197)—are one-story frame with gabled-roofs, have horizontal sliding doors, and rest on crib foundations. Both are set over the water, and surrounded by decks on three sides. The Sivertson fish house is in fair condition and has high integrity, and was built between 1939-41. It was a CCC building that was relocated after Camp Windigo closed, recycled by Sam and Stanley Sivertson. As such, the building provides a good example of the acquisitory nature of the evolution of fisheries. It measures 20' x 46', and is typical of the CCC camp temporary structures, built of pre-fabricated 4' sections seamed with vertical boards, with nine-light windows set into the upper corner of most sections. The nearby Ekmark fish house was built c. 1920, belonged to either Karl Ekmark or Tommy Eckel, is in fair to poor condition, and has high integrity in all areas. It is a much smaller building, measures approximately 15' x 19', and has two-light windows.

Two privies (#200A and #195A) are associated by location, respectively, with the Sam Sivertson residence (#200) and the Eckmark net house (#195). They are average size, and measure
5' x 5' and 4' x 4'. Several net drying reels (#199A), located between the two net houses, also survive at the fishery.

The construction date of the Sivertson laundry (#194) is unknown. The building has high integrity in all areas except for materials, which is medium, and is in poor condition. It is a shed-roofed building measuring approximately 8' x 10', and was built by the Sivertsons to house a water pump and a washing machine. The building rests on a log foundation, has rolled asphalt roofing, horizontal beaded board siding, and a two-light window.

**Significance**

The Sivertson Fishery compares to the Edisen Fishery and the Rude Fishery in significance and integrity, yet stands alone as the longest continually operating commercial fishery on Isle Royale. The structures and abundant fishing equipment within the complex illustrate the evolution of early 20th century Lake Superior commercial fishing techniques. Overall, the structures at the Sivertson Fishery maintain strong historic integrity of feeling and association with their historic uses. The site and structures have been altered very little since their construction, although all suffer to some degree from neglect. The reuse of CCC structures illustrate the adaptive reuse practiced by Isle Royale fishermen, and the existence of nearby Island House resort structures further illustrates the layering of history that exists at many of the sheltered harbor areas on the island.
Figure 3.15. Plan view of Sivertson / Eckmark / Singer property on Washington Island. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
Sivertson Fishery, Washington Harbor

Sivertson Fishery, Sivertson House (#200).

Sivertson Fishery, Sivertson Privy (#200A).

Caretaker’s Cottage (#193).
Sivertson Fishery, Sivertson Net House (#199).

Sivertson Fishery, Sivertson Net House (#199) and Privy (#195A).

Sivertson Fishery, Carl Eckmark's Net House (#195).

Sivertson Fishery, Carl Eckmark's Net House (#195) and Privy (#195A).
COMMERCIAL FISHING
ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Sivertson Fishery, Eckel/Eckmark Fish House (#197).

Sivertson Fishery, Sivertson Fish House (#198), a recycled CCC building.

Sivertson Fishery, Eckmark/Eckel Fish House (#197).

Sivertson Laundry (#194).
COMMERCIAL FISHING
ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Sivertson Fishery, Net Drying Reels (#199A).

Sivertson Fishery, piles of old fishing nets.

Sivertson Fishery, old net buoys near Eckel/Eckmark Fish House.

Sivertson Fishery, box of net floats.
Sivertson Fishery, gas barrels, boat, net buoys, and floats.

Siverson Fishery, net buoys and fish boxes.
OTHER SURVIVING ISLE ROYALE FISHERIES

(PHOTOS OF STRUCTURES CAN BE REFERENCED IN ACCOMPANYING NOTEBOOK)

HOLTE FISHERY, WRIGHT ISLAND
PERIOD: 1920s-1940s

The Holte Fishery on Wright Island retains high to medium integrity, and has eight surviving historic structures that are in fair to poor condition. Structures include two residences, a privy, fish house ruin, net house ruin, two docks, and a boat, and convey the utilitarian design typical of the Isle Royale commercial fishery working structures. Most are gabled, one-story buildings, and have walls of board siding. However, the main house (#212), was built in the 1920s of log construction, has interlocking notching and a low-pitched roof. The Holte Fishery has been described as equal to the Edisen Fishery in its representation of a Scandinavian-American fishery operation during the prime fishing years on Isle Royale. The Holte Fishery integrity suffers due to the deteriorating condition of many of the work-related structures.

ANDERSON FISHERY, JOHNSON ISLAND
PERIOD: 1915-1925

The Anderson Fishery on Johnson Island has high to medium integrity, and retains five historic structures, including a cottage, privy, two net houses, and a dock. However, some of the representational structures are gone and the fish houses are collapsing. The two fish houses were typical one-story, gabled structures with horizontal board siding. The Anderson cottage and privy, however, are log construction. Like Sivertson's, the Anderson Fishery is particularly significant for the assortment of fishing ephemera that survive on site, such as fishing nets and floats. Many of the structures maintain a clear relation to the water, and their appearance has not been obscured by vegetation. The site's integrity of setting, feeling, and location suffers, however, from the loss of work-related structures.

MATTSON FISHERY, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: 1901-1930s

The Mattson Fishery in Tobin Harbor has only medium integrity as a commercial fishery due to loss of historic material. Although the complex retains a number of historic structures, including two residences, a privy, fish house, net house, dock, storage buildings, and what may have been a boat house, many of the structures are in poor, or ruinous, condition. Construction dates of most structures are not known, although it appears that the earliest building is the Mattson / Anderson cottage (#292), built in 1901-02, and the most recently constructed building is the boat house (#292A), built in 1951.

Buildings are constructed of a variety of materials, and different construction types. The residence (#292), privy (#292F), net house (#293), boat house (#292A), and fish house (#292B) are all frame construction, sided in shiplap, some with cornerboards. Residence #292 has a pyramidal-hipped roof, with extended eave
overhang and a shed-roofed dormer at the rear; all others have gabled or shed roofs. These buildings present a unified, more "refined" appearance, although they are unornamented and utilitarian in design. Windows are two- to four-light fixed. Differing from these buildings is the Mattson cottage (#295), which is a one-story gabled structure built of vertical log construction, with wood shingles in gable ends, and under the porch. This earlier building appears more "rustic" than the other residential sided buildings, which are all painted either white or red.

The Mattson Fishery is important as the only fishery in Tobin Harbor. Brothers Art and Ed Mattson were key figures in the Tobin Harbor summer community during the heyday of the resort era on Isle Royale, and constructed many of the recreational buildings for summer residents of Tobin Harbor, as well as maintaining the buildings and making repairs. The existence of the Mattson Fishery illustrates the resourcefulness and entrepreneurship of Isle Royale fishermen, and represents them as important economic members of the summer communities.

**BANGSUND FISHERY, ROCK HARBOR**
**PERIOD: 1906-1929**
The Bangsund Fishery in Rock Harbor has a medium degree of historic integrity. Only a few historic structures remain: a residence, two sleeping cabins, log crib dock, and a grave dated 1860-1899. The buildings are all in good condition, and most (excepting the crib dock), have high integrity in all areas. The main residence (#141) is a one-story, gabled, horizontal log building, and is in good condition, but its integrity of design, materials, association, and feeling suffer from alterations to the building, and the lack of associated structures. Other than the crib dock no work-related structures survive at the site.

**ANDREW / SCOTLAND FISHERY, AMYGDALOID ISLAND**
**PERIOD: 1910-1912**
The Andrew / Scotland Camp on Amygdaloid Island has a medium degree of integrity. Only two structures remain: a residence and a net house, both of which are in good condition. The property is currently used as the North Shore Ranger Station.
Isle Royale Resorts and Summer Communities

Figure 4.1. Map of Isle Royale resorts and summer communities, from Gale and Gale, 98.
PERIODS: c. 1892 - mid 1930s; mid 1930s - late 1960s
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION NUMBERS: Johns Hotel

OVERVIEW
Isle Royale tourism and recreational development had modest beginnings, but would grow to become be the final important industry of the island. Initiated by commercial fishermen during the late 1800s (the first "official" resort opened c. 1892), tourism arose in the wake of failed mining ventures on the island. In order to supplement their hard-earned fishing incomes, a number of Isle Royale fishermen began to operate their own rustic resorts, and some even added cabins, dining rooms, "trading posts," and other modest facilities to their operations. These early resorts were very rustic, and mainly served sports fishermen and those who sought the rugged wilderness.

In 1902 the first "full-service" resort was initiated on Isle Royale, attracting well-to-do tourists who were interested in escaping to a "magical isle," where "hay fever was unknown," and sport fishing opportunities were abundant. Between 1902 and the mid-1930s, Isle Royale's summer population expanded to include a number of seasonal recreational communities that emerged in Isle Royale's sheltered harbors, as increasing numbers of vacationers discovered the island and built their own private "camps." The "golden era" of tourism on Isle Royale occurred between the 1910s and 1920s, when the island was easily reached by passenger steamer, and lodging was available at a range of resort facilities, from rustic fish camps to full service hotels that offered tennis, golf, bowling, and social activities.

As the face of Great Lakes tourism changed during the late 1920s and into the 1930s, the tourism industry on Isle Royale suffered. Factors included the Depression, the decrease in Great Lakes passenger steamer transportation, and the creation of Isle Royale National Park.

The creation of Isle Royale National Park during the mid-1930s brought changes in recreational and resort development on the island. Summer residents and commercial fishermen donated or sold their properties to the government, and in return were granted life leases and Special Use Permits, and restrictions were limited further development. Three families named minor children on their leases, extending the continuum of use. The four major resorts were either razed or adapted. Volunteers from the Civilian


3 While new construction was allowed only with special permission, some summer residents were permitted to salvage structures from abandoned properties.
Conservation Corps were brought to Isle Royale in 1935 to build new park facilities. During the war years tourism at Isle Royale National Park suffered as transportation to the island was irregular. Visitation dropped, and two of the three remaining resorts were closed by the Park Service.

The 1950s brought new recreation management paradigms to the National Park Service. A Park Service renewal project—"Mission 66"—introduced new models for appropriately combining recreation and wilderness. As a result, a new type of recreation emerged, one which focused on the island's wilderness rugged qualities. The majority of Isle Royale National Park is currently managed as a wilderness, and only currently only 14 summer residents hold life leases.

EARLY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION
The development of Isle Royale tourism and recreation was part of the larger phenomenon of Great Lakes/north country tourism. Many resort communities prospered from the mid-1800s to the early part of the twentieth century along the Great Lakes as a result of the national popularization of wilderness tourism, navigational development, and the availability of travel opportunities.5

Beginning in the early 1800s, Americans sought the wilderness of the Great Lakes and North Country region. The desire to travel to the untrammeled wilderness was linked with early concepts of nature's ability to heal, and to physically and morally revitalize. Up until the 1910s, tuberculosis was the primary cause of death, and fresh air was believed to be an effective treatment. Since 1877, many fresh air organizations in industrial cities began to take tenement children to the countryside.6 The vast bodies of fresh water of the Great Lakes were also seen as having restorative powers. As early as 1842 Dr. Daniel Drake, a prominent Cincinnati physician, was directing attention to the Great Lakes area for its beneficial effects on health.7 "Hydropathy," or "water-cure," was introduced by Charles Christian Schieferdecker in his 1848 publication of The Water-Cure in America. In his book, Schieferdecker declared: "I am convinced, that cold water, exercise, a proper diet, and pure air, will give men the age of 150 to 200 years..."8 Although the implementation of water cures only lasted up to the turn of the century, the basic concepts of water, and nature, as having restorative powers would persist.


5 Kathryn Eckert, Buildings of Michigan, 44.
Many resorts, referred to as “watering places,” were built by bodies of water, and offered summer refuge for both the opulent tourist and the invalid. "Resort centers typically thrived where scenic beauty, a pleasant climate, and a historical past conjoined."9

The formative years for the Upper Great Lakes tourist industry were between the 1880s and the 1920s. The quest for north woods wilderness recreation during the late 1800s and the early twentieth century has been attributed to several factors; namely, the oppressive summer heat of the increasingly industrialized urban centers, and symptoms of hay fever. Both these irritants served to motivate city and rural dwellers to spend their summers in the cool, pollen-free north woods. New Hampshire’s White Mountains were the escape destinations on the east coast, while northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota were the midwesterners’ options. Another factor that lead to the new development of northern resorts was Theodore Roosevelt’s avocation of living “the strenuous life.” In 1899, Roosevelt encouraged urban Americans to fight “flabbiness” and “slothful ease,” and to instead live a “life of strenuous endeavor.” By 1901 when Roosevelt entered the White House, the adventurous and invigorating north country had become a popular tourist destination. Additionally, during the progressive movement many industrial recreation experts advocated the extension of children’s play theory to adult life, and the concept of “summer vacation” was initiated.10

Navigational development in the Great Lakes also stimulated tourism enterprises in the north country. “The Great Lakes provided a ready-made transportation system for ferry trips and excursions that linked Chicago, Detroit, and other major cities with other shoreline communities and islands. Many popular, healthful, and beautiful resorts were within easy reach of major Great Lake cities by boat or by train.”11 Lake Superior passenger ship travel increased with the opening of the canal at Sault Sainte Marie in 1855, broadening lake streamer travel opportunities from Detroit and Chicago.

As travel opportunities became more available, tourism in the Great Lakes region thrived. With the growth of the cutover region, railroad companies began to expand their services into the lucrative passenger trade. By offering passenger excursions to the north country, the rail companies could capitalize on the vast network of railroads already in place, originally built to

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9 Eckert, 44.
10 Tsuchiya, 427.
11 Eckert, 44.
transport lumber and iron ore. Rail companies developed advertising pamphlets that emphasized the scenic beauty of the wilderness along their routes, touting the wild beauty of the north as being “almost untouched by the hand of man...,” and romanticizing Lake Superior country as a “magical wilderness,” where “hay fever was unknown.” Opulent “palace” cars and Pullman sleepers were added to trains in order to comfortably accommodate the wealthy recreational traveler. Business thrived for the railroad passenger trains. In Michigan, Houghton’s Union Depot had 38 separate trains stopping each day by the end of the nineteenth century.

Railroad companies capitalized on the easy access to many resorts by water, and offered recreational travel to the north by steamer. The Northern Steamship Company, operated by the Great Northern Railway, provided passengers with the same comforts and entertainment that were offered on trans-Atlantic liners. During the late-nineteenth century, city dwellers from Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Buffalo could travel in style by steamer to the romanticized wilderness of Lake Superior north country.

Rail and steamship companies made additional investment in Great Lakes tourism by building resort and hotel accommodations—impressive destinations with which they could entice their passengers to use their services. In 1887, the extravagantly elegant, one-thousand-guest Grand Hotel was built on Mackinac Island with combined capital from several railroad and steamship companies. Mackinac Island was the most famous and successful Great Lakes resort, and was viewed as the “supreme achievement of resort establishments.”

Other elegant, though less famous, Great Lakes resort communities flourished, such as Charlevoix, Petosky, and the Les Cheneaux Islands, to name only a few. These resorts were aimed at the wealthy, who could afford the travel costs, and had ample leisure time for extended vacations.

The rising resort industry was good for Michigan’s economy. Resort centers were promoted by the government, transportation companies, chambers of commerce, and newspapers.

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14 Ibid., citing Pamphlet, Northern Steamship Company (New York, 1910), 6.
15 Eckert, 44.
Information on the summer resorts around the shores of both the Great Lakes and the inland lakes was provided by railroad commissioners and the State Board of Health. The board of health published a directory of approximately 125 summer and health resorts, mineral springs, and sanitaria, identifying railroad and steamboat connections and hotels at each. These promotional publications contributed to the settlement and popularity of resort centers.17

**EARLY RESORT AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: 1894 - 1920s**

National trends in tourism and recreation prompted tourists to seek out Isle Royale in the 1880s, and in 1894 the first rustic "resort" was opened in Washington Harbor by John F. Johns. Isle Royale offered a rugged vacation spot to turn-of-the-century city-dwellers, with excellent fishing and crisp, clear air. The remoteness that had made Isle Royale so difficult a location for the mining, logging, and commercial fishing industries is what made it so attractive to tourists.18 During Isle Royale's golden era of tourism and recreational development, the island would see the rise of modest, rustic resorts operated by commercial fishermen; full service resorts built by steamship owners and other developers; a private sporting club developed by a group of wealthy Duluth businessmen; and a number of private cabins and houses, many of which congregated in harbors around the island creating vital summer cottager communities. However, the majority of resort and recreation accommodations in Isle Royale's history were of modest proportion when compared to those grand resorts farther south on the mainland.

The growth of Isle Royale tourism was fostered by the Great Lakes shipping companies.19 Lake steamer owners began as early as 1865 to develop the recreational potential of Isle Royale, and used their passenger ships coming from Houghton, Duluth, and Bayfield for tourist excursions. The ships were attractive to tourists not as much for the destination of wilderness islands in Lake Superior, but because of the grand scale entertainment that was offered on board the ship, in the form of all night parties, bands, and orchestras. These passenger ships would circle Isle Royale and occasionally allow travelers to go ashore for a few hours, but most travelers were not interested in "roughing it" on Isle Royale.20 Sportsmen from Duluth would occasionally visit Isle Royale, staying in tents or abandoned buildings.

One early plan to capitalize on the wilderness resort potential of Isle Royale was formulated in the early 1880s by the Rock Harbor Land Company, a subsidiary of the *Isle Royale Land*.

17 Eckert, 44-45.
18 Karamanski, et al., 131.
Corporation (the company that had financed the Wendigo Mine exploration). In 1883 the Rock Harbor Land Company proposed the first grand resort for the island, promising to make Isle Royale "...one of the best summer resorts in the northwest." They boldly described their plans:

"Not only will hotels be built in several places but bath houses, a summer theater, pavilion, dance hall and all that goes to make a resort popular and attractive. At Rock Harbor one of the finest hotels on Lake Superior will be built. It will be a second Grand Hotel and the island will some day be a rival of Mackinac...The company will offer inducements for resorts and Isle Royale will be a paradise within a few years."  

The company went so far as to survey a town site on Rock Harbor near the old Ransom Mine, but the plan was never brought to fruition.  

The first attempt to profit from the growing interest in outdoor recreation was made by Isle Royale commercial fishermen, who provided the first resort and summer cottage accommodations by renting out rooms in their homes, and offering meals and guide services to tourists in order to augment their fishing incomes. This trend would persist through the 1930s on Isle Royale.

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20 Karamanski, et al., citing Portage Lake Mining Gazette, 8 July 1865.  
'hall,' in order to offer their guests a few more comforts. At its height, the John's Hotel complex had fourteen buildings, including a barn for cows, chickens, and hogs; a separate dining cabin; five cottages, an ice house, a root house, and a store-post office. Johns cleared trees from the grounds to improve the lake views. A white picket fence divided the four-and-one-half acre island, separating livestock from paying guests.23

Figure 4.3. Accommodations at the Johns Hotel were rustic; guests shared the island with the family's cows, chickens, sheep, and pigs. Photo ca. early 1900s, from Gale and Gale, 101.

23 Ibid., citing Edgar Johns, Oral History interview, n.d., Mott Island Museum, Isle Royale National Park, 12-13, and National Register of TOBIN HARBOR RESORT

Another early rustic resort development was created around 1900 by Scandinavian fisherman Gus Mattson, who began to take in guests on a part-time basis at his fishing station on Minong Island in Tobin Harbor. Mattson operated the resort until 1906, when he sold it to three men from Calumet, Michigan, who renamed it the Tobin Harbor Resort.24 Although some additions were made to the old units under the new ownership, the Tobin Harbor Resort remained rustic in nature.

Wood frame sleeping cottages, most consisting of only one room, provided the bulk of the accommodations, while a log dining cabin and a log sitting room with fireplace and piano comprised the common buildings.25 The accommodations were aimed toward those who came to Isle Royale for the wilderness, not luxurious accommodations.26 A brochure for Tobin's Harbor Resort stated: "Don’t look for a large, pretentious hotel for you will be disappointed."27 Tobin's Harbor resort was renamed the Minong Lodge in the early 1930s.

Historic Places Registration Form for the “Johns Hotel,” Isle Royale National Park files, Mott Island, Isle Royale.
26 Ibid.
27 Gale and Gale, 109.
Figure 4.4. Tobin Harbor Resort (renamed the Minong lodge in the early 1930s). The lodge is the log building on the right, the white frame building on the left is the boarding house, and the dining hall is the center building. Photo from Gale and Gale, 109.
**Kneut Kneutson's Park Place**

On a less modest scale was Kneut Kneutson's resort. Circa 1900 Kneutson developed Park Place, (later renamed the Rock Harbor Lodge) on the southeastern end of Isle Royale in Rock Harbor. Kneutson purchased a block of land in what he named “Snug Harbor,” and platted out streets and house lots. “With the help of his son, Kneutson built several small cottages, a central dining room, and cleared an area for tents. By 1902 Kneutson boasted that his resort could accommodate 50 people, as long as they did not mind bringing their own tents. Kneutson’s resort enjoyed modest success and several families annually spent part of their summer at Snug Harbor, and several private cabins were built on lots near Park Place.”

Like the other early fishermen’s resorts, in its beginnings Park Place was a modest, rustic operation.

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28 Karamanski, et al., citing Duluth Herald, 26 April 1902.
Another early recreational development was the private and exclusive Washington Club in Washington Harbor. Established in 1902 by twenty of Duluth’s powerful business leaders, the Washington Club was a private sporting club, created with the intent of continuing "the breeding and propagation of brook trout, instruction and mutual improvement in the Art of Angling and the promotion of social culture among its members."  

In creating the Washington Club, investors each contributed $300 to purchase the old Wendigo mine buildings and seventy acres along the creek at the head of Washington Island. The buildings were converted to create the club. One of the log buildings became a clubhouse that had a fireplace in the expansive lounge area, private rooms that accommodated ten, and a men’s dormitory. A structure that was near this main building became the club’s kitchen, dining room, and servant’s quarters. The Washington Club was decidedly masculine in theme, but did have hot water with showers and baths. Like other private rod and gun clubs which were a popular means of recreation at the turn of the century in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (such as the Huron Mountain Club and the Sylvania Club), membership to the Washington Club was exclusive. Women were not permitted to visit without approval from the board. Although the Washington Club was more distinctive than any local gun club, the grounds and buildings were much less grand than the business deals that transpired there.

Figure 4.6. The Washington Club at Washington Harbor, ca. early 1900s. Photo from Gale and Gale, 107.

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30 Ibid., citing Detroit News, 14 January 1923; Portage Lake Mining Gazette, 25 May 1902.

FIRST FULL-SERVICE RESORT IN 1902: SINGER’S ISLAND HOUSE

These early recreational opportunities offered on Isle Royale were very different from the comfortable resorts of Mackinac Island, and were even too rugged an experience for many sporting parties and sports fishermen. The need for facilities to serve both the sportsman and other wilderness enthusiasts grew as interest in the island’s recreational opportunities increased. John F. Johns sold his hotel complex in 1902, leaving absolutely no place for tourists or sportsmen to stop on the west end of the island. “One of the noblest health and pleasure resorts in the world is lying ready for somebody to choose as the location of a summer hotel and summer cottages,” lamented the Duluth Herald.32

This need for a full-service public resort on Isle Royale was answered in 1902 by Walter H. Singer, head of the Lake Michigan & Lake Superior transportation company. There was strong competition in the booming Great Lakes shipping industry at the turn of the century, and the biggest plans and the most money often secured domination of the most profitable shipping routes. Isle Royale was part of Singer’s plan to compete with the strong financial clout of A. Booth and Company, a shipping and fishing firm that had been working to control the industry on the North Shore. Singer planned to capitalize on the expanding tourist industry on Isle Royale, which would permit him to compete with Booth and Company.

Singer began his resort development by building an exceptionally large dock at Washington Harbor to accommodate the Iroquois, his new, two-hundred-passenger ship. The Booth Company responded by placing one of their fastest ships, the America, in direct competition for the Isle Royale and North Shore trade.33

After establishing the Iroquois on the Isle Royale route, Singer began promoting his plans for an Isle Royale resort. He set the location on Washington Island, at the far west end of Isle Royale. It was here he built the Island House, a two-story frame hotel, complete with a kitchen, and dining room, and private guest rooms. Ten cottages were built along the lakeshore on both sides of the main building. A boardwalk was built along the shore, and a recreation building which included a bowling alley (that doubled as a dance floor) was constructed. An immense radio tower was erected in 1910 to be used for both entertainment and navigation. Singer’s was the first full-service resort on Isle Royale, and brought a dramatic change in the island resort accommodations. The Island House “became the principal destination for Isle Royale-bound travelers between 1904


33 Ibid., citing Singer Scrapbook, Minnesota Historical Society, 32.
Figure 4.7. Washington Harbor looking east (Singer’s Island House resort is to the right). Photo ca. 1916, from “Picturesque Washington Harbor, Isle Royale Michigan,” (promotional brochure), 5.

Figure 4.8. Island House “lounging room,” ca. 1916. From “Picturesque Washington Harbor,” 6.

Figure 4.9. Pavilion and bowling alley at Singer’s Island House resort, ca. 1916. From “Picturesque Washington Harbor,” 6.

Figure 4.10. “A cozy home,” one of the guest cottages at Singer’s resort, ca. 1916. Photo from “Picturesque Washington Harbor,” 3.
and 1920."34 In time, the Washington Island resort became known as "Singerville."

Singer's resort was representative of the "golden era" in Isle Royale's tourism history. During this period, the island was alive with tourists (the Island House was on the regular schedule of five different passenger boats), more consistent communication was available on the island, passenger ships like the America and the Iroquois provided comfortable accommodations for tourists, and rail-boat trips were offered to Isle Royale from Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and by the Omaha Railroad. Steamer trips were so frequent that in 1904 a customhouse was established on Washington Island. The island had seen so much growth as a result of Singer's resort, that in 1904 the Duluth Herald wrote: "The day is near at hand when Isle Royale will be the objective point for people from all over the country. Persons of wealth, or, at least, moderate means, will compose the throng...Isle Royale will become the Mackinac of Lake Superior."35

However, regardless of the success of his resort, profits were not what Singer had hoped, and due to several unexpected problems related to his fleet (one vessel caught fire and burned, and several consecutive docking accidents occurred with the Iroquois), the Iroquois was eventually eliminated from Isle Royale trade route, and the America of Booth and Company became the new main access to the island for tourists.

**Isle Royale's Summer Communities**

A new group of vacationers began to visit the island during the first part of the twentieth century, as consistent boat service was provided to Isle Royale. Vacationers from Minnesota (St. Paul and Duluth), Omaha, Missouri (St. Louis), Illinois (Rockford), and Kansas (Leavenworth) came to Isle Royale to escape the heat, hubbub, and hay fever of the midwestern cities. Many established summer homes and cabins on the island, often camping before building or buying cabins. Often, summer residents would have friends and family visit, who would subsequently purchase property nearby. Summer communities began to emerge in Tobin and Rock Harbors in the early 1900s, and would continue to grow into the late 1920s. By the early 1930s there were more than 50 cabins on lots and the small islands around Isle Royale, with the heaviest concentration in

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34 Ibid., citing Donald Wolbrink and George Walling, Special Report to the Director on Isle Royale Resorts, 20 October 1937, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Mott Island Museum, Isle Royale National Park, 16-23.

35 Singer Scrapbook, Minnesota Historical Society, 39; Portage Lake Mining Gazette, 31 May 1904.
Rock Harbor and Tobin Harbor at the southeastern end of the island.  

The sheltered Tobin Harbor area was especially popular—over 20 families bought islands and lots there beginning in the early twentieth century. Tobin Harbor also had many small islands. In many cases, entire islands were purchased for private recreational development. Tobin Harbor became the largest community of summer residents on Isle Royale in the 1920s and 1930s—nearly every island in the harbor had a cabin and a dock. Some were fine homes with large stone fireplaces and several bedrooms, while others were modest, one-room cabins.

The Reverend Maurice D. Edwards family was among the first to establish a summer residence in Tobin Harbor. Alfred Merritt, who headed a road-building crew for the mining operations in Siskiwit Bay in the 1870s, built a cabin in 1911 on the first island south of Blake Point. He later bought an island across from Tobin’s Harbor Resort, where the family retains a life lease. Over the years Merritt purchased more than a dozen islands around Isle Royale. The Dassler family was another of the first families to camp and later build a summer cabin in Tobin Harbor. Over 19 families owned cabins in Tobin Harbor, including the Connolly, Edwards, Cochran, How, Savage, Snell, Merritt, Siefert, Musselman, Newman, Smith, Beard, Stack, Bailey, Wheelock, Underwood, Kemmer, and Gale families. Ralph Waldo Emerson, a relative of the famous writer, also built an elaborate house, boathouse, and concrete sidewalk on a small island.

Figure 4.11. Photo of the Dassler family, one of the first families to camp and later build a summer cabin in Tobin Harbor, ca. 1906. Photo and caption from Gale and Gale, 110.

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36 Gale and Gale, 98.
37 Ibid., 110.
38 Ibid., 112.
39 Ibid., 110.
In **Rock Harbor**, several families bought lots from Kneut "Commodore" Kneutson in during the 1920s and built cottages. Families built cottages in other parts of Rock Harbor, as well. Residents included the Warren, Langworthy, Orsborn, Ralph, Tooker, Davidson, and Manthey families. The Ralph cabin remains today, but only a small shed remains from the Warren Camp.  

Other private recreational development was occurring at the western end of the island, near Singer’s Island House resort and the Washington Club. The *Barnum* colony, located on Barnum island in Washington Harbor, was one of the first private recreational developments at Isle Royale. In 1902 George G. Barnum, millionaire grain merchant from Duluth, purchased the island on which the old John’s Hotel complex stood, and established his own summer home. (Barnum originally had the idea of developing a resort on Mott Island in Rock Harbor, but did not follow through with his plans.) Barnum Island became a rather active summer colony when several of Barnum’s businessmen friends also built homes there. The summer colony had an amiable mix of wealthy Duluth merchants, with dozens of poor, hard working commercial fishermen just across the narrow inlet.

Other private recreation complexes were created on islands during the golden era of Isle Royale tourism. The *McGath* compound on Amygdaloid Island was built as a private resort by the McGath family in the early 1920s, and was said to have cost more than $40,000 to build. Millionaire George W. McGath was a principal of the Sheridan Coal Company. Servants for this compound lived at Captain Kidd Island, at the present McPherren compound, until the 1930s.

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40 Ibid., 116.

41 Ibid., 132.
The summer communities on Isle Royale thrived during first few decades of the twentieth century. The resorts were the focal point of the summer community daily life. "Boat day" was held in Rock and Tobin Harbors, and brought together commercial fishermen, summer residents, and lodge guests. Everyone was invited to dances and evening programs at the resorts, and members of fishing families and summer residents were often called on to play the piano, or to bring a concertina, accordion, or fiddle. The harbor enclaves developed their own personalities: Tobin Harbor and the Minong Lodge attracted older folks, while the Rock Harbor Lodge in Rock Harbor was for the younger set. Recreation was the centerpiece of summer life, and included boat regattas, pig roasts, trolling, "greenstoning" (collecting the island's greenstones), boat cruises, and moose watching.

Although there was a class distinction between the fishermen, who lived and worked on the island, and the summer residents who vacationed there, a symbiotic relationship existed. In several ways, the fishermen were invaluable to the summer residents. It was a challenge for some summer residents to install and keep a boat dock. Every spring, returning residents would discover whether their docks had been carried out with the ice, or if their buildings had been damaged by downed trees as a result of fall gales. Fishermen helped summer residents maintain their summer properties, by fixing buildings, motors, refinished boats, buildings docks, etc. Fishermen often opened up cabins and provide transportation from the boat dock to the camps: Tobin Harbor fisherman Art Mattson would pick up the Snell family at the dock when they arrived for the summer and deliver them to their cottage. Mattson also prepared the Snell's boats ahead of time, and his wife would clean the Snell cabin, build a fire in the stove, and have biscuits ready when they arrived. Some fishermen were skilled builders, and constructed residential cabins and outbuildings for island summer residents. Fishermen were able to augment their income by performing these tasks for the summer residents, who literally had few or no other choices. In many ways, the fishermen were essential to the economic system of Isle Royale: they were business people, service employees, and craftspeople.

RESORTS STILL RUSTIC BEFORE BELLE ISLE
During the first decade of the twentieth century, excluding Singer's Island House, Isle Royale's tourist accommodations were

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42 Ibid., 98.
43 Karamanski, et al., citing oral history interviews with Gail How Place, 16 July 1983, Carol Maas interviewer; Donald and Florence Wolbrink, 28 August 1983, Carol Maas interviewer; and Laurie Snell, 3 September 1983, Carol Maas interviewer, Mott Island Museum, Isle Royale National Park.
simple and rustic. Tourists could count on being provided with food and shelter, but the emphasis was on the outdoors, not on social activities, lovely rooms with a view, or elegant surroundings.

Resort owners attempted to wrap themselves in the cult of the wild, to associate their rugged accommodations with the strenuous life that was in vogue during the Progressive Period. "The class of real Americans who spend their vacations on Isle Royale includes the best type of our citizenship," proclaimed one brochure. "They are men and women who love nature in the rough, yet who desire all the comforts and advantages for rest and recreations." Resort brochures, such as Tobin Harbor, attempted to put the best face on their humble offerings by pointing out:

"The time has gone by when men and women desire to spend their vacations showing their jewelry and their fine silks and satins to others...where society functions are arranged for every morning, noon and night. There are plenty of such affairs at home all the time..."

Commercial fishermen continued to operate rustic resort establishments on the island. Scandinavian fisherman Erick Johnson opened the Tourist's Home Resort in 1907, on what is currently known as Davidson Island in Rock Harbor. Tourist's Home was rustic, and consisted of several simple one- and two-room cottages clustered together on the small island. Johnson claimed he could offer accommodations for as many as 50 people at one time. There was a large central dining room where hearty meals were served. The chief attraction of Tourist Home was inexpensive rates, which ran $10 for a week's room and board.

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47 Ibid., citing Tourist Home Cottages-Isle Royale (n.d., n.p.) St. Louis County Historical Society, Duluth, Minn.

48 Ibid.
Johnson sold the property to the Davidson family of St. Paul in 1910. Many of the resort cabins were sold to the Tobin's Harbor Resort to be used as sleeping cabins. By 1922 the Davidsons had constructed a substantial two-story house with Colonial Revival style influences. This summer house was an anomaly on Isle Royale, where the majority of private recreational structures were small, one-story frame cabins with unfinished interiors.

Isle Royale's reputation for as rugged and simple resorts would change in 1912, however, with the creation of Fred Schofield's Belle Isle Resort.

**Belle Isle Resort sets new standards**

In 1912, Fred Schofield set a new standard on Isle Royale when he opened the Belle Isle Resort. Schofield had co-owned the Tobin Harbor Resort for a short time, but wanted to start a new resort. By June 1912 he had built the main lodge and four cottages on Fish Island (now called Belle Isle), off Isle Royale's northeastern shore. The dining room had a dramatic view of the harbor, and the lodge had a sitting room with a fieldstone fireplace. The sitting room was decorated with oriental rugs, hunting trophies, photographs, and lake trout on the walls.49

Figure 4.14. The Davidson House on Davidson Island (formerly Johnson Island, the site of the former Tourists' Home resort). Photo from Gale and Gale, 126-127.

Within a few years, the Belle Isle resort was the finest on Isle Royale. Schofield even put in a small, nine-hole golf course (the longest hole was only 94 yards), a tennis court, shuffleboard court, and a swimming "pool" (which was actually a walled-off portion of Lake Superior). At its peak the resort included twenty-eight cottages and two central bath houses that boasted electricity and toilet facilities. The cabins did not have plumbing, but the staff delivered hot water each morning.51 Today, only one of the cabins, a simple hipped-roofed wood frame guest cottage,
remains standing at Belle Isle. The remains of the old dock can be seen in the shallow water northwest of the modern boat landing. Remnants of the nine-hole golf course (which has been turned into a campground) are difficult to detect, but the cement slabs of the shuffle board courts remain.\(^{52}\)

The Belle Isle resort was a different class of resort, and presented the other Isle Royale establishments with a higher standard with which to compete. Kneutson's Park Place had suffered from the neglect of the indifferent managers he had hired to run the resort while he was away during the First World War. The resort was renamed Rock Harbor Lodge, and in 1920 Kneutson realized he would need to make improvements, or the Rock Harbor Lodge would soon fail. Kneutson eventually allowed Mrs. Bertha Farmer, his daughter, to run the lodge.

**Rock Harbor Lodge Meets the New Standard**

The Rock Harbor Lodge thrived under Bertha Farmer's management. She insisted that her father modernize the lodge, and by 1922 construction began on the Craftsman style guest house. It was a two-story wood frame structure, built on the rocks that overlooked Lake Superior. Painted bright white, the building became the most prominent landmark in Rock Harbor. The guest house had 16 rooms, each equipped with electric lights, and sinks with hot and cold running water. Indoor flush toilets were convenient to each room. Many guests opted to stay in the small one-room cottages, but the guest house was the preferred choice among Rock Harbor resorters.

Under Bertha Farmer's dedicated management, the Rock Harbor Lodge adopted a more "refined" lodge atmosphere. Employees were asked not to socialize with guests. Social dances and berry picking or greenstone gathering expeditions were scheduled activities, tennis courts were added, and Bertha had her entire family working at the lodge. Her father "Commodore" Kneutson would spin stories about the early days of Isle Royale, and would occasionally lead a boating excursion to a special spot or fishing

\(^{52}\) Karamanski, et al., "Enticing Island," 145.
Figure 4.16. Rock Harbor Lodge guest house. Photo from Gale and Gale, 122.
hole. Bertha also enlisted the skills of Indian guide John Linklater, who took lodge guests on excursions to the old Minong Mine site at McCargoe Cove. The guests were then treated to an overnight at Linklater's fishery at Birch Island, where they slept in tents and used fir boughs as bedding.53

Rock Harbor Lodge and Belle Isle became the new standard of Isle Royale resorts during the 1920s. Although the Tobin Harbor Resort (or Minong Lodge, as it was renamed in the 1930s) had the same rustic beginnings as the Rock Harbor Lodge, it did not offer any of the recreational opportunities that the other two provided. The Minong Lodge had no modern sanitation features, either. The lack of facilities at the lodge was advertised almost as an advantage: "One of the most delightful things, though, about Minong Lodge is you can do as you please."54

The new Rock Harbor Lodge provided stiff competition for the Belle Isle Resort. One of the Rock Harbor Lodge's greatest advantages was that its dock could accommodate large vessels—even the three-hundred-and-twenty-one foot South American, the largest passenger ship on Lake Superior. Most scheduled steamers stopped at Port Arthur (currently Thunder Bay), Ontario, however, before making their stops at Isle Royale. This gave the Belle Isle Resort an advantage, in that it was the first resort visited on the island. Fred Schoefield tried to make the most of this advantage. A passenger on the America recalled:

In and out we wound among the islands, and suddenly, turning a corner, came upon a pier, a crowd of laughing people dressed like Indians, and back in the trees a group of rustic cottages. This was Belle Isle. There was a bitter rivalry, it seemed, between Belle Isle and the next resort, Tobin's, and as soon as the America docked, feverish proselytizing began among the passengers. A few of those who had planned to go on to other resorts ran for their bags and scuttled ashore just before the plank was hauled in.55

FISHERMEN CONTINUE TO OFFER RUSTIC LODGING SERVICES

Although Rock Harbor, Belle Isle, Minong Lodge, and Singer's Island House resort on Washington Island were the main resorts which competed for Isle Royale's tourist trade, the tradition of fishermen offering lodging services continued into the 1930s. In the 1920s-1930s, Chippewa Harbor fisherman Holger Johnson and his wife Lucy ran a resort called Johnson’s Resort and Trading Post. Johnson's accommodations were very rustic, and all the seven structures were log cabins with one, two, or three rooms, each with a porch that overlooked the Chippewa Harbor.

Holger and his wife offered moose watching tours, fishing and hiking trips, and ran a dockside trading post where visitors could buy polished greenstones and "Indian" birch bark souvenirs made by the Johnson family (after being taught the craft by a Grand Portage Ojibwa woman).  

In the 1930s during the slow fishing season of July and August, Holger's half brothers, Milford and Arnold Johnson, offered a boat rental and guide service for Rock Harbor Lodge guests. Other fishermen offered services under this arrangement, too, and also sold fish to the lodges.

**CHANGES IN GREAT LAKES TRANSPORTATION DURING THE DEPRESSION**

"After World War I, the character of recreational development changed. The development of the automobile, the completion of the Minnesota North Shore highway, increased trucking, and the Depression all diminished the passenger and package freight business, which by the 1930s was virtually discontinued on Lake Superior. Opportunities for accommodating travel on passenger vessels diminished considerably. Automobile transportation and the construction of good roads opened new areas to development and democratized resorting. Privately owned recreational cabins and cottages were built along lakeshore highways instead of being confined to areas near boat docks and railroad stations. Additionally, changing economic and social conditions would no longer support the expensive and elaborate turn-of-the-century life style."  

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58 Eckert, 50.
TOURISM CHANGES ON ISLE ROYALE

On Isle Royale, the ill effects of the decreased lake transportation were augmented by the sinking of the America on June 7, 1928. The America had been providing biweekly service to each Isle Royale resort for over twenty-five years, and its loss was devastating to resort owners on Isle Royale. (The America struck bottom near the shore of the North Gap, near Washington Harbor.) Additionally, the opening of the North Shore road in Minnesota a few years prior to the loss of the America caused a decrease in boat traffic both along the shore, and to Isle Royale. The passenger steamer access upon which the resorts depended so strongly upon was dwindling.

H. Christiansen and Sons picked up some of the passenger transportation needs with the Winyah, a fishing transport vessel that ran between Duluth and Isle Royale during the 1930s, but the accommodations were nothing like those of the elegant America. However, the Winyah provided service to Isle Royale two times per week, and more comfortable accommodations were available on an inconsistent basis on other ships. Port Arthur provided the most dependable access, and the elegantly fitted S. S. Isle Royale, and Waubic could make the voyage to Isle Royale in four hours. In order to reach this port from the U.S., however, one had to take a train to Duluth, then travel all night over land, or by steamer, to Port Arthur. This made a six-day trip with more than ten separate connections from Chicago or Detroit. One alternative was to take an excursion steamer from a major lake port, like Chicago. In 1933, "Six Day Wonder Cruises" were offered by the Isle Royale Transportation Company. These cruises brought city people to the north country and residents of Lake Superior to the World's Fair in Chicago. The prolonged voyages were detrimental to island tourism, however, as tourists dollars that would have gone to Isle Royale resorts were spent aboard ship.

Difficulties with transportation continued to plague Isle Royale resort owners, and nearly every year resort brochures had to explain a new access plan. Visits to the resorts began to decline, and some resort owners hoped that a National Park on Isle Royale would alleviate access problems.59

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND ISLE ROYALE TOURISM:
LATE 1920S - 1930S

Over time the summer residents developed strong emotional ties to the island, becoming voluntary "keepers" of island history and protectors of the island. Their appreciation led many, such as Frank Warren of Rock Harbor, to head efforts to preserve Isle Royale from excessive development. Ironically, these same

proponents would later be forced to sell their property to the park commissions.60

The proposal of an Isle Royale National Park resulted in an increased amount of publicity for the island during the 1920s and early 1930s. Albert Stoll, outdoor editor for the Detroit News and leading advocate for the creation of Isle Royale National Park, brought several official inspection trips to Isle Royale, and served to promote the area's attractions.61 Annual trips to Isle Royale were offered to members of the Saginaw YMCA in the 1930s, and the Boy Scouts also began to regularly send groups to the island.

The creation of Isle Royale National Park Service was further influenced by changing concepts of wilderness recreation in the 1930s. No longer did tennis courts and golf courses seem appropriate for the Isle Royale wilderness; new perspectives called for a more harmonious interaction with nature. Visitors and summer residents had been attracted to Isle Royale for its remote and rugged wilderness qualities. This attitude guided the National Park Service in its planning for Isle Royale National Park. The island was treasured as a wilderness, and biologist Adolph Murie wrote (as a consultant for the National Park Service), "low density of human impact and few encroachments of mechanized civilization would help keep Isle Royale a special place for the visitor..." Murie further advised that trail development, tourist facilities, and publicity be kept to a minimum. Recreation at Isle Royale National Park was to be a "wilderness experience."62

In 1936, when the federal government began to purchase private holdings of land and property on Isle Royale, the relationship between Isle Royale property holders and the National Park Service became strained. The Park Service was interested in receiving donations of property from private owners, or in purchasing the property outright. Cabin owners and commercial fishermen were offered either Special Use Permits, or life leases, if they would agree to donate their property to the government.

Park Service consultant Donald Wolbrink, a landscape architect and proponent of wilderness preservation, was hired to inspect and evaluate the resorts, and recommend how they might best be managed as part of the park. Wolbrink noted that the resorts did not have adequate sanitation facilities. He suggested that Belle Isle was the best run resort on Isle Royale. However, he recommended that the Rock Harbor Lodge be continued as a resort, but that extensive remodeling of the lodge be undertaken. Wolbrink evaluated the Rock Harbor Lodge cottages and servants' housing as unsalvageable. He recommended that the

61 Little, "Island Wilderness," 31.
62 Ibid., 76-9.
Minong Lodge be razed, and thought that considerable rebuilding would need to be done in order to reopen Singer's Resort, but that even these changes would not provide consistent use. Wolbrink thought that the Washington Club, which was not in good repair, could be redeveloped if the need arose for accommodations on the western end of the island. The main building had burned years earlier, and the old servants quarters were being used as the club house.63

CCC IMPROVES RESORTS AND RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE
The National Park Service was able to acquire all of the Isle Royale resorts, and in 1935 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers were dispatched to Isle Royale to implement park improvements. Over the next five years CCC recruits completed a number of projects, including building the National Park Headquarters on Mott Island, and a new resort facility at Washington Harbor.

At Washington Harbor, the CCC combined the old Washington Club structures with new construction to build the Windigo Inn. A main lodge was created out of the old servants' quarters, and a new guest house that had private bathrooms was constructed. The Park Service had planned that the three facilities (Rock Harbor Lodge, Belle Isle Resort, and the new Windigo Inn) would provide accommodations for visitors who wished to take an circle tour of the island.64 The Park Service commissioned Bertha Farmer as the Park Service concessionaire, and was to run three Isle Royale resorts.

ACCESS PROBLEMS FOR THE NATIONAL PARK
Access to Isle Royale continued to present a problem for the resort operation, however, even with the establishment of the national park. Shipping companies' excursion routes were no longer profitable. Passenger shipping continued to decline on Lake Superior, succumbing to competition from railroads and automobiles. The Park Service had difficulty obtaining its own ship for use at Isle Royale (first by the federal fiscal conservativeness caused by the Depression, and then by the pressing needs of wartime shipping). They employed an old Coast Guard cutter, the Ranger, which was not capable of sailing heavy seas and could only accommodate a few passengers. As a result of the poor access, Bertha Farmer had difficulty making a profit running the three Isle Royale resorts, and became increasingly disenchanted with the government's administration of the park. Bertha Farmer was also disappointed in the unwillingness of the Park Service to promote Isle Royale, as she

64 Ibid., citing Little, 77-8.
had hoped it would become a park that would rank among Yellowstone or Yosemite.\textsuperscript{65}

Mrs. Farmer’s management of the three resorts eventually generated complaints from park visitors, the Park Service did not renew her concession contract.\textsuperscript{66} A private firm, National Park Concessions, Inc., which had operated other tourist accommodation services for the National Park Service, took over the management of the three Isle Royale resorts in 1943. Improvements were made under this new management to Rock Harbor, including new dockage, cooking facilities, and the addition of a power generator. However, the concessionaire was not able to manage the three operations profitably, and the Belle Isle Camp and the Windigo Inn were closed. The two facilities reopened for a brief period after World War II, but by 1952 Belle Isle closed for good, and the service at the Windigo Inn remained, but was limited. The Rock Harbor Lodge had also become a financial loss, due to a lack of visitors, and in 1953 the concessionaire sought relief from its contract.\textsuperscript{67}

\textbf{CHANGING RECREATION PARADIGMS IN THE 1950S - LATE 1960s}

The number of visitors to Isle Royale National Park reduced drastically during the 1950s. The last visits from the excursion ships had come in 1948 (the \textit{Noronic}), and in 1949 (the \textit{South American}), and in 1952 only 2830 people came to Isle Royale. Additionally, many park visitors were disappointed with the services they encountered when they did visit. In 1955 one visitor complained that the lodge staff had southern accents, his small cottage was next to a noisy gas generator, and that the tennis court was grown over and unusable.\textsuperscript{68}

The National Park Service’s “Mission 66” program would address such issues as these to improve parks after years of neglect. Upgrades, alterations, and modifications were made to the Isle Royale National Park Service Headquarters on Mott Island, and to the Rock Harbor Lodge, as well as other sites, including Windigo at Washington Harbor. Additional employee housing was added at Windigo, Rock Harbor, and Mott Island.

The decision by the Park Service to remove the bowling alleys, tennis courts, and golf courses were vindicated in the mid-1960s as the recreation boom in the United States continued to emphasize the “back-to-nature” movement. Backpacking and canoeing became increasingly popular. Isle Royale responded with new, yet simple visitor accommodations at Rock Harbor, and the \textit{Ranger III}, which could carry close to one hundred people

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., citing Little, 78, 150, 147.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 148-53.

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., 153.
and would make scheduled stops three times per week, was prepared to serve the rising tourism need.

Park visitation tripled between 1959 and 1971, and by 1991 had stabilized at approximately 14,000 visitors every year. Most of the visitors are there to canoe, kayak, or hike. Hikers may stay one day at the lodge, but most hike and camp away from the lodge. Currently, 99% of the land acreage of the park is managed as wilderness, and several of the island's historic resources serve as interpretative sites, drawing visitors interested in the island's cultural history. Although most of the resorts no longer exist, the island's recreational industry is still well represented by the Rock Harbor Lodge, and the numerous private cabins around the island.

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INTRODUCTION
Since the early 1890s, Isle Royale has been a destination for Midwest summer recreationalists from Kansas, Minnesota, Illinois, Nebraska, Missouri, and elsewhere. Beginning in 1892 with the opening of the first official Isle Royale "resort," up to the 1930s, when the federal government began land acquisitions for the creation of Isle Royale National Park, five different types of resort and recreational developments arose on the island. These included small-scale, "rustic" resorts run by commercial fishermen; large-scale, full-service resorts; private sporting clubs; private "camps"; and private resort "compounds" and "colonies." Some types of recreational development prevalent in other Great Lakes locations and northern states did not exist on Isle Royale. For example, there were none of the grand, high-style seasonal estates or opulent "wilderness camps" designed by architects and built by the very wealthy. Nor were there formal summer community associations, organizational group camps, or hunting shacks. All developed areas on Isle Royale were accessible only by water, either by private boat or excursion ship.

Isle Royale summer vacationers could pursue a variety of activities, from very organized social pursuits, to rugged, outdoor activities. Isolation, recuperation, outdoor recreation, and sport fishing were goals for Isle Royale summer vacationers. The most refined activities offered at the Isle Royale larger-scale resorts were tennis, shuffleboard, and croquet. One resort went so far as to develop a small golf course.

Summer resorters on Isle Royale ranged from the very rich and well-to-do to those of more modest professions such as ministers, teachers, and writers. One millionaire created a summer "colony" on a small island, and invited friends and business associates to build summer homes and cottages. Another business magnate created his own private resort compound on an isolated island, and housed his servants in another compound on a nearby island. A group of elite Duluth businessmen initiated a private and exclusive sporting club, dedicated to the "Art of Angling." Others purchased property in Isle Royale's protected harbors (especially Rock and Tobin Harbors), and created less extravagant seasonal "camps."

SURVIVING RESORT AND RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES
The recreational buildings on Isle Royale were not the opulent summer homes or resorts found in some areas of lower Michigan. Most of the surviving recreational structures are the private camps, which include cabins, cottages, houses, and associated outbuildings built between the early 1900s to the 1930s. Recreational camps were often informally grouped in a harbor,

69 Resort and recreational properties discussed in this section can be referenced in the accompanying photo notebook.
creating a community. The buildings are mostly simple frame construction, although the private resort compound and corresponding servant's compound, both built during the 1920s, have log buildings.

The other surviving recreational types are resorts, both small-scale "rustic," and large-scale "full-service." Of the rustic type, only two remain: one of the earliest, the John's Hotel in Washington Harbor, dates from the early 1890s and has three surviving log structures: the original hotel, and two additional log structures that were incorporated into the Barnum Colony during the early 1900s. The John's Hotel has been listed on the National Register. A later rustic resort--Holger Johnson's Resort and Trading Post in Chippewa Harbor--has only one surviving building, which is also log, and was built ca. 1929.

Surviving structures from the island's four large-scale resorts date from the early 1900s to the 1930s, and are mostly frame construction. Of these four, only the Rock Harbor Lodge survives, to some degree, intact. The Rock Harbor Lodge had modest beginnings when it was initiated in 1902. It evolved into a large-scale, full-service establishment in the early 1920s in an effort to compete with other Isle Royale resorts. Of the three other large-scale resorts, only a handful of secondary structures remain. Two frame guest cottages and privies, built between 1902 and 1920, survive at Singer's Island House at Washington Harbor, along with the radio tower, boardwalk remnants, and dock ruin. The Belle Isle resort on the island's northeastern end has one surviving frame guest cabin (currently used by the Park Service as a patrol cabin); and the Minong Lodge in Tobin Harbor retains one log guest cabin, two privies, and the lodge foundation.

One additional recreational type once existed on Isle Royale: the private sporting club. The island's only private sporting club, the Washington Club, no longer exists. Created from renovated mining buildings by a number of Duluth businessmen in 1902, the Washington Club was akin to, although not as elaborate as, the hunting and shooting clubs that were popular in the Detroit area, and later, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan during the turn of the century. Few clues to the existence of the Washington Club remain.

**Characteristics of Small-Scale, "Rustic" Resorts**

"Rustic" resorts existed from the early 1880s to the 1930s on Isle Royale. These often began as Isle Royale fishermen offered room, board, and guide services to visiting sports fishermen, in order to supplement their fishing incomes. Some of these family-operated businesses expanded as Isle Royale became more popular with tourists. Buildings were added as demand grew. Those frequenting the fisherman's rustic resort came to
experience the wilderness, and activities commonly offered by the larger resorts – tennis, croquet, and shuffleboard – were not provided.

The small rustic resorts had many of the same building types as the larger, full-service resorts. They typically had a main lodge (also called a "hotel" or "hall"), a central dining cabin; and outlying guest cabins. The fisherman's resort would often have one central privy, rather than individual privies for each cabin as the larger resorts often had. Structures were log or frame construction with shiplap siding. Guest cabins were small, ranging from 8' x 8' to 10' x 12', and had austere interiors. They often had a half- or full-length, unscreened front porch. Roofs were typically gabled or pyramidal half-hipped. The axis of the guest cabins often paralleled the lakeshore, overlooking the water. Other structures in the small resort operation included the fisherman's residence, and structures typical to commercial fishing operations, such as a fish house and dock, net house, storage and tool sheds, net reels, and possibly, a root cellar, laundry, or generator shed.

**BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLE OF SMALL-SCALE RUSTIC RESORTS**

**JOHNSON’S RESORT AND TRADING POST, CHIPPEWA HARBOR**

**PERIOD: 1929**

Other than the John's Hotel property, the only surviving remnant of a small-scale rustic resort on Isle Royale is a cabin for Holger Johnson's Resort and Trading Post in Chippewa Harbor. Holger and Lucy Johnson started the resort in the 1920s to supplement their commercial fishing income. Holger had come to Isle Royale from Sweden in 1904, and fished in Rock Harbor. He later took over the Chippewa fishery from his uncle, Sam Johnson, and fished there with his cousin, Otto Olson. The Johnson's were isolated in Chippewa Harbor, but extremely self-reliant. With their five children, Holger and Lucy began wintering at Isle Royale in the late 1920s. The Johnson's had a Michigan-appointed schoolteacher stay with them in Chippewa Harbor for five consecutive years.

The Johnson's Resort and Trading Post in the 1920s originally included six small cabins, a store, and a large dock. Other structures on the property were two fish houses with docks, a root cellar, a building used as a schoolhouse, and three outhouses. The Johnsons maintained canoes at several of the inland lakes for the guests' use, sold furs, polished greensones, supplies, and souvenirs to passing boaters and lodge guests from the Trading Post. Johnson picked up his resort guests at Eagle Harbor, Michigan in his launch, the *Ah-Wa-Nesha*.

Of all the Johnson buildings, only the Johnson guest cabin (#218) remains. Built ca. 1929, the cabin is in fair condition, and has

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71 Gale and Gale, 134.
high integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship. The setting has moderate to high integrity, but the integrity of association and feeling are low due to the lack of other surviving buildings and structures that would relate the building to the resort and commercial fishing contexts. The cabin is a one-story, gabled, horizontal log building. It is a modest building, no more than 10' x 10' in size, and has interesting details in its gabled, full-width front porch. The porch has a pole railing with crossed pole bracing, and decorative crossed poles above the entry in the gable end. The vertical board, Z-braced door has a handmade door handle. An eight-light window is located to the left of the door, and there is one four-light awning window. The interior was heated by woodstove.

SIGNIFICANCE
Although only one structure survives at the Holger Johnson Resort and Trading Post, it is important as one of the last surviving small-scale rustic resort guest cabins operated by an Isle Royale commercial fisherman. (The only other surviving rustic resort property is the 1890s John's Hotel and related log buildings, which provides reference and comparison to the later example of the Johnson resort.) Located in isolated Chippewa Harbor, the only refuge between Siskiwit Bay and Rock Harbor,

the Johnson property has added significance in that it was one of the few sites of year-round occupation, illustrating the self-sufficient nature of many of Isle Royale's fishermen and their families.

73 Karamanski, et al., citing Theresa Farmer correspondence and brochures, "The Spruces, Building History," National Park Service files.
Chippewa Harbor

CHARACTERISTICS OF LARGE-SCALE / FULL-SERVICE RESORTS

The first full service, large-scale resort on Isle Royale was Singer’s Island House resort in Washington Harbor, which opened in 1902. In addition to Singer’s Island House resort, three other full-service, large-scale resorts were developed on Isle Royale: the Rock Harbor Lodge, the Minong Lodge, and the Belle Isle resort. Many of those who later built summer cabins, cottages, and houses on the island stayed at these resorts during their early visits to Isle Royale.

The four full-service resorts on Isle Royale large were designed to be comfortable—offering modern conveniences in a wilderness setting. The resort typically had a main lodge (also referred to as a “hotel,” “boarding house,” “hall,” or “guest house”), that offered guest rooms, and in some cases, toilets and showers. The main lodge typically had a large sitting room that served as a reception area and gathering place, and were stylishly decorated, and had a large native stone fireplace. The resort office was often in the main lodge. The large resorts had a central dining hall and kitchen, and a number of guest cottages. Guest cottages were often twice as large as those of the smaller rustic resorts (12’ x 24’ and 18’ x 36’ were common at the larger resorts, as compared to the tiny 8’ x 8’ or 12’ x 12’ cabins at the smaller resort establishments). Although guest cottages did not have plumbing, the resorts supplied hot water to guests every morning, and many cottages had their own private privies. Most of the large-scale resorts had additional structures for recreational activities, such as bowling alleys, dance pavilions, lawns for croquet, and tennis and shuffleboard courts, and in one instance, a small golf course. Boardwalks were often built to link the cottages and other recreational structures with the main lodge. Resorts also had outbuildings for storage and facilities maintenance such as warehouses, workshops, and housing for materials, pumps, and generators. One of the most important structures was the dock, which would have been of substantial size in order to accommodate large passenger vessels, as opposed to the docks at the smaller, commercial fishermen’s resorts.

The Isle Royale resorts were far from the scale and opulence of the famous Grand Hotel of Mackinac Island in Lake Huron. Most of the large-scale resort structures on the island were frame construction, except for the Minong Lodge resort, which had a combination of log and frame buildings. All of the buildings, main lodges and guest cottages at Singer’s Island House resort, the Rock Harbor Lodge, and the Belle Isle resort were frame. In contrast, the Minong Lodge had a log lodge, a frame dining room building, a frame boarding house with sleeping rooms, and a combination of log and frame guest cabins. The Minong Lodge had rustic beginnings, and acquired some of its guest cabins from other properties, including Erick Johnson’s Tourist Home resort.
Recycling existing buildings was not common practice among the larger resorts, which sought to achieve a refined, and cohesively tasteful appearance. The use of milled lumber and other "urban" materials for cottages and resort buildings was meant to give visitors a "taste" of wilderness, but to also give them a feeling of comfort, safety, and service.

The resort main lodges/guest houses were often gabled, two-story frame structures sided in clapboard or shiplap, and painted white. Full- or half-length verandahs (the Island House had a half-length, two-story verandah), decks, and porches—all oriented toward the water—were common. Elements of Craftsman and Greek Revival were common applications. Guest cottages were laid out along the shoreline, overlooking the water, and had deep, full-width, open-air porches. These one-story cottages had more of a refined, "home-like" appearance than the small rustic resort guest cabins, and had shiplap, droplap, or wood shingle siding.

**BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLE OF FULL SERVICE/LARGE-SCALE RESORT**

**ROCK HARBOR LODGE, ROCK HARBOR**  
**PERIOD: EARLY 1900S - PRESENT**

Structures surviving at the Rock Harbor Lodge include the dining hall/kitchen and dinner bell, the America dock, one guest cottage, and the guest house. Other buildings that remain but do not relate to the historic period include an auditorium (constructed as a temporary facility by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the late 1930s), a motor storehouse/diver/fire cache that was constructed in 1947 from material salvaged from the Tooker's boathouse on Tookers Island), and a storage building.

The Rock Harbor Lodge resort, originally called "Park Place," had modest beginnings. Kneutson purchased a block of land and platted out streets and house lots around the harbor, and with the help of his son, built several small cottages, and cleared an area for tents. Kneutson's early guest "cottages" were structures that consisted of walls that were half wood, half canvas, and had wooden floors. Roofs were also canvas. A central dining room and recreation/lodge/office building was built ca. 1908-1910. It was during this time that Kneutson began to replace the canvas and wood structures, building permanent wood frame cabins, such as the Spruces cabin (#47), in 1911. The interiors of the guest cottages were decorated to give the atmosphere of miniature homes, and although furnishings were spartan and consisted of boxspring beds, washstands, and lamps, they were bright and colorful, with rag rugs on gray floors, white or natural walls, and pretty curtains. The cottages varied in size, had one to three rooms, and were heated either by woodstove or fireplace. A number of private camps were built by individuals on lots near Park Place, and in its heyday during the 1920s, the informal summer community that formed in Rock Harbor as a result of
Kneutson's development was equivalent to the community in Tobin Harbor.

All the early resort buildings were originally frame construction with droplap siding, corner boards, and exposed rafter tails. There was an apparent effort to link the resort structures visually through design and materials. The Spruces cabin and the Rock Harbor Lodge guest house have the highest integrity and unaltered exteriors.

The Spruce's cabin (#47) was built by Kneut Kneutson and his son, Earl, and is one of the first in the resort's development. The cabin measures 16' x 18', and is in good condition. It retains high integrity in all areas except association and feeling, due to the lack of other contemporary resort cabins, and later development. It is a one-story, one-room structure with a pyramidal hipped-roof and a recessed corner porch. The interior has a tongue-and-groove floor, and a cement fireplace with an exterior chimney. Windows are two-over-two, the two-panel door has a ten-light window, and skirting is board and batten. The cabin is typical of the austere accommodations offered by the resorts, and is significant as one of the last of the 1920s resort cabins remaining on the island.

Karamanski, et al., 147.

A later addition to the resort, and one of the best (and last) surviving examples of resort architecture on Isle Royale, is the Rock Harbor Lodge guest house (#40). The structure is in good condition, and has high integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship. The integrity of setting is medium, and the association and feeling are low, due in large part to the presence of the guest lodge units that were built in 1957 as part of the Mission 66 program. The guest house was built in 1922-1924 under the direction of Mrs. Bertha Farmer, who took over the management of the lodge in the early 1920s. The 16-room guest house set new standards for Isle Royale large-scale resorts with its electrical service, running water, and the first indoor flush toilets on the island. It is a Craftsman influenced, two- and one-half-story, gabled wood frame structure that overlooks Rock Harbor. Design details include beveled shiplap siding, gabled dormers with flared eaves, exposed rafter tails, four-over-four windows, and large triangular knee braces with beveled ends. The entry has a gabled hood over French doors, and the main sitting room has a rough stone fireplace. The building's color has been changed from its original light color (possibly white) to dark brown, but aside from this, the exterior has been altered very little.

The first America dock (#40C) was constructed in 1898 as a “T” plan. The current dock was rebuilt in 1974 on the same location, but differs slightly in design from the original (the 1974 alteration
involved partially removing a portion of the original dock). The original America dock played an important role in the history of the Rock Harbor Lodge, and is named after a vessel owned by the A. Booth and Company that carried fresh fruit, canned goods, lumber, machinery, fish, and passengers to and from the island from 1902-1928. The dock was built and maintained by the Rock Harbor Lodge, and was where they received and bid farewell to their guests during the early resort era.

The dining room / kitchen (#41), built in 1908, has been extensively altered and has low integrity of setting, design, workmanship, association, and feeling, but retains medium integrity of workmanship. It has high integrity of location, is in good condition, and continues in its original use. The size of the current structure is almost triple that of the original building due to episodic remodeling in 1918, and the 1940s, 1950s, and 1980s (the structure currently measures approximately 44' x 48'). Windows were changed from six-over-six to plate glass and one-over-ones, and a front porch was added. It originally had a low pitch hipped-roof; now it is elevated, and has several visible rooflines.

The Rock Harbor Lodge's bronze dinner bell (#41A) was added between 1907-1919, and was used by the resort as a call to meals and to sound emergencies. It is the only surviving example of this type associated with the early 20th century resort era on Isle Royale. The bell still functions, is in good condition, and has a high degree of integrity in all areas except for feeling, due to the alterations made to the dining room / kitchen. Located behind the dining hall, the bell was part of a formal landscape of tennis courts, croquet court, and lawn furniture, and was used to sound the call to a family-style dinner. As such, it is representative of the home-like atmosphere that was a trademark of the resort era.

**Significance**

Due to the extensive alterations and additions made over the years, in addition to those made as part of the National Park Service's Mission 66 program, the Rock Harbor Lodge complex retains only moderate integrity. (Mission 66 structures were not included in the 1995 LCS survey, but should be considered once they reach 50 years of age. For a discussion of the Mission 66 style, see the Conservation and National Park Service Administration Associated Property Types section). Some buildings, such as the guest house (#40), the Spruces cabin (#47), and the lodge dinner bell (#41) retain high integrity in all areas but association and feeling, due to changes made to the resort complex.
Regardless of changes that have been made to the buildings within the complex, the Rock Harbor Lodge remains as one of the first Isle Royale resorts, and has remained in continuous use for almost 100 years. When compared to the low integrity of the other three remaining resorts, the integrity of the Rock Harbor Lodge is relatively high. Several of its principle buildings survive, including structures that are representative of the different aspects and types of tourism such as small guest cottages, the central dining hall and dinner bell, the large dock, and the guest house. The guest house stands on its own merit as a representative of the hey-day of Isle Royale tourism, and remains as an unaltered example of early 20th century resort architecture.

**Characteristics of Private “Camps”**

The third type of recreational development on Isle Royale are the private "camps," that included cabins, cottages, houses, and associated outbuildings built for seasonal use. The majority date from first three decades of 20th century, and are concentrated at the northeastern end of the main island. Twelve of these private recreational properties are located in Tobin Harbor, and four properties with structures (out of more than seven original camps) remain in Rock Harbor. Additionally, there are three small private recreational camps remaining on Horner, Clay, and John’s Islands, although these sites have only one or two surviving buildings, or are in ruin.

The camps were located in isolated areas, on a few acres (many on their own tiny islands), and were accessible only by boat. Cabins were often sited up on high bluffs, set back in the trees, overlooking the water. Access was gained to the camp from a dock via wood or stone steps, roughly laid stone pavers or over the exposed native rock. There was often an informal “patio” on a nearby flat rock landing. Entities that drew the isolated camps were the resorts, which served as centers of activity in the harbor communities, such as the Minong Lodge in Tobin Harbor, and the Rock Harbor Lodge in Rock Harbor.

Private camps typically contain a number of modest, one-story frame structures, including a seasonal residence, one or two guest cabins, and a privy. The primary residential structures of the camps were cabins, cottages, or houses. The terms “cabin” and “cottage” are similar: a cabin is a “small, crudely or simply built, one-story house,” while a cottage is a “small house.” On Isle Royale, the terms cabin and cottage are used to describe the simple one-story buildings that were built as seasonal residences with an unfinished interior, heated by woodstove or native stone fireplace as a heat source. In most cases these buildings did not have electrical power or plumbing.

The private house differed from the private cabin and cottage in that they were larger (houses averaged 1300 square feet, as
compared to a cabin's average of 700 square feet), were often more than one story, and were generally more substantial structures, with finished interiors, heat, electrical service, and indoor plumbing. Although the term "house" suggests long-term occupancy, Isle Royale houses were occupied seasonally. There are only a handful of private houses remaining on Isle Royale: the Davidson House (1922) on Davidson Island, the Stack/Wolbrink House (1900-1906) on Minong Island, the Ralph House (1930) in Rock Harbor, and several of the residences on Barnum Island (early 1900-1920s). The three different types of structures—cabins, cottages, and houses—were all sited similarly, however, and had similar outbuildings and associated structures.

Both the main residential and guest cabins were constructed of unfinished frame construction and utilize a variety of materials and designs; some structures may have been pre-fabricated or mail-order designs. Interiors and exteriors were often painted. Residential cabins are generally small, one-story, frame buildings with lap or shiplap siding, although some structures built after 1930 have a thin log veneer siding. Roofs are gabled, hipped, or pyramidal-hipped. Residential buildings commonly have a shed-roofed, full-width, deep front porch that offers clear view of the water. The porches are frequently enclosed, with a ribbon of one-over-one windows, or screens. Other windows are one-over-ones, two, six- or eight-lights, or six-over-sixes. Many of the buildings have six-lights that are fixed, casement, or awning, and are set alone, in sets, or in ribbons along the face of the structure. The buildings are generally set on concrete block, stone or log piers, or directly on exposed stone. Roof covering is primarily asphalt roll or asphalt shingle.

Construction materials used for camp buildings vary from manufactured materials to second-hand materials scavenged from other buildings. Occasionally, entire buildings were moved from other properties. Log construction for recreational buildings was rare—other than the early John's (1890s) horizontal log cabins on Barnum Island, and the vertical log cabin on Horner Island, only two private recreational properties with log buildings survive (the McGath and McPherren Compounds, both of which were commissioned by millionaire George McGath).

Day to day living in Isle Royale private cabins was primitive and labor-intensive. Most cabins were designed only for warm-weather use, and have little or no insulation. A "California Cooler," a non-mechanical refrigerator that utilize Lake Superior's cool air are used, and electricity is dependent upon generators. The lack of modernization is seen in the presence of privies, hand pumps, and dry sinks.
Guest cabins were often simple frame structures ranging in size from 12' x 12' to somewhat larger; some may have been recycled buildings moved from other sites. Boat houses ranged from 10' x 20' Kemmer boat house, to the 34' x 37' Savage boat house. Storage houses averaged 100 sq. ft., although some were significantly larger than this, such as the McGath store house, which measures 12' x 16'; and privies are small, shed-roofed structures measuring approximately 4' x 4', and are usually set at a distance from the cabin and screened with vegetation.

Docks were essential at Isle Royale camps, and were wood, set on pole cribbing. Other common outbuildings included a small storage building, wood shed, boat house, and occasionally an open-air picnic shelter. Camps occasionally have yard ornaments such as totem poles, flagpoles, and rock walls. Seasonal houses often had a generator or pump house. In some cases, the structures within a camp were visually unified in design, materials, and workmanship. In many cases, however, camp buildings were more eclectic in appearance, and had little cohesiveness of design between buildings. This may reflect the periodic construction and repair done by local fishermen, the recycling of buildings from one site to another, or possibly from reusing materials that summer residents brought from home.

**Best Surviving Examples of Private Camps, Tobin Harbor “District”**

Twelve private camps survive in Tobin Harbor, which was one of the most vital summer communities on Isle Royale during the height of its tourism industry. The Tobin Harbor community evolved over time as friends, families, and others who enjoyed the rugged beauty of Isle Royale, purchased property and made Tobin Harbor their summer home. During the hey-day of the Tobin Harbor community, the Minong Lodge resort was the “community center” of the Tobin Harbor district.

Many of the Tobin Harbor camps retain their original outbuildings and other associated structures, and although additions and repairs have been made over the decades, eight properties retain a high degree of integrity: the Snell Camp, Siefert Camp, Connolly Camp, Kemmer Camp, Beard Camp, Edwards Camp, Merritt Camp, and the Stack/Wolbrink Camp. In addition to these seven properties, four additional Tobin Harbor properties retain high/medium integrity: the Gale Camp, the How Camp, the Dassler Camp, and the Savage Camp. Collectively, these properties exist as an historic district that retains high integrity, and express a continuum of use that began during the early 20th century. Although some of the summer residents no longer return, nine camps are still used by life lease holders and their families during the summer. Several of the Tobin Harbor camps
represent the families that strongly supported and advocated the Isle Royale National Park movement, and formed the Isle Royale Protective Association in the early 1930s. Involved supporters included the Merritt, Connolly, Siefert, Smith, and Edwards families (and the Warrens from the Rock Harbor community), among many others.

SNELL CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: 1905-1920

The Snell Camp has four surviving structures: a cottage, guest house, store house, a "writing shack," and a dock and stair with rail—all of which but the writing shack have a high degree of historic integrity in all areas. The cottage and guest house are in good condition, the store house is in fair condition, but the writing shack is in poor condition. The Snells came from Wheaton, a suburb of Chicago, and discovered Isle Royale by word of mouth in the early 1930s. Roy Snell was a writer of mystery and children's books, and his wife suffered from severe asthma. The Snells began vacationing at Isle Royale in 1931, as a good place for Mrs. Snell to summer, staying in a cabin in Rock Harbor. In 1932 they purchased the present property.76

The Snell Camp is sited high a bluff, overlooking Tobin Harbor. Access is via a steep stairway with railing from the dock. The camp has an interesting combination of structural styles and materials. All but the writing shack were built by Tobin Harbor fishermen Art and Ed Mattson. Art Mattson did other construction for the Snells, and rebuilt their dock in the 1960s. The dock is wood board, and measures approximately 10' x 15'. Laurie Snell said that it was the last dock Art ever made.77

The Snell cottage, guest house, and store room were built between 1905 and 1920 by the Mattsons, and are not unified through design, materials, or workmanship. The structures are all frame, and have either gable, hip, or shed roofs. Building siding varies and includes horizontal, vertical, and shiplap siding. The writing shack has plywood and vertical board siding, and its date of construction is not known. Windows on all structures vary in size, and those that open are screened to facilitate ventilation and keep out insects. Roofing is rolled asphalt. A number of additions have been made to the structures, between the late 1930s and the 1960s.

The Snell cottage (#296) is the earliest structure on the site, built in 1905. It is a one-story, gabled, frame structure with horizontal board siding and cornerboards. It is average size for an Isle

76 Statement of Significance, National Park Service files; compiled based on an oral history interview with Laurie Snell (9/3/1982), newspaper clippings, and a diary kept by Lucille Snell.

77 Ibid.
Royale recreational cottage, and measures approximately 27' x 26' (702 sq. ft.). John and Roy Snell built an enclosed porch addition, which overlooks the lake. The cottage has an exterior brick chimney, and interesting detail on porch skirting, which is a crossed, peeled pole design. The cottage has a combination of window styles: six-light windows in sets of two, and a 12-light in the gable end.

The Snell guest house (#298) was built in 1915-1920 by Art and Ed Mattson. It measures approximately 28' x 11', and is a one-story frame structure. The store house (#297) was built ca. 1915-1920 by Art and Ed Mattson, and was acquired by the Snells after the creation of Isle Royale National Park. Roy hauled the building, which was used as a sleeping cabin for the resort, across the harbor from the abandoned Minong Lodge resort to the Snell Camp.

The Siefert cottage (#291) was built ca. 1920, and is average size for an Isle Royale cottage, measuring approximately 24' x 33' (792 sq. ft.). There is a ribbon of two-over-two windows across the front of the cottage, facing the lake, and a small porch at the back. The building is set over the water, with the front supported by cedar posts; the base is enclosed with picket skirting. It has a central, interior brick chimney and woodstove heat, and water is hand-pumped. The door is three-panel with glass.

The structures within the Siefert Camp are all one-story buildings that are dissimilar in form, and have pyramidal-hipped (cottage), shed (storage building), and shed roofs (privy). However, the buildings are painted white, and further unified in the use of shiplap siding. The storage building (#291A) is a later addition to the camp, has slightly narrower shiplap, and additional details. Roofing is asphalt shingle on the cottage, and rolled asphalt on the privy. Peeled pole construction is used for the railing of the cottage.

The Siefert cottage (#291) is in fair condition, and the other structures are in good condition. Dr. and Mrs. Robert G. Siefert bought the cabin in 1926, after coming to the island around 1922. The Sieferts were members of the Isle Royale Protective Association, and were in favor of the island becoming a national park.

SIEFERT CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: CA. 1920 - 1955
The Siefert Camp has four surviving structures: a cottage, storage building, privy, and crib dock ruin; all of which but the crib dock ruin have high integrity in all areas. The Siefert cottage (#291) is in fair condition, and the other structures are in good condition. Dr. and Mrs. Robert G. Siefert bought the cabin in 1926, after coming to the island around 1922. The Sieferts were members of the Isle Royale Protective Association, and were in favor of the island becoming a national park.

The structures within the Siefert Camp are all one-story buildings that are dissimilar in form, and have pyramidal-hipped (cottage), shed (storage building), and shed roofs (privy). However, the buildings are painted white, and further unified in the use of shiplap siding. The storage building (#291A) is a later addition to the camp, has slightly narrower shiplap, and additional details. Roofing is asphalt shingle on the cottage, and rolled asphalt on the privy. Peeled pole construction is used for the railing of the cottage.

The Siefert cottage (#291) was built ca. 1920, and is average size for an Isle Royale cottage, measuring approximately 24' x 33' (792 sq. ft.). There is a ribbon of two-over-two windows across the front of the cottage, facing the lake, and a small porch at the back. The building is set over the water, with the front supported by cedar posts; the base is enclosed with picket skirting. It has a central, interior brick chimney and woodstove heat, and water is hand-pumped. The door is three-panel with glass.

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79 Ibid
The storage building (#291A) is probably a pre-fabricated CCC structure, and may be the 10' x 10' paint house originally located at Rock Harbor, or on Mott Island. As such, it would have been built between 1935-1941 by the Civilian Conservation Corps volunteers. The Park Superintendent gave the building, which had been dismantled, to Siefert in 1955. The building has corner boards, milled purlins, and cut shingles on the gables. There is a panel door with trim that continues up to gable, and one-over-one windows in both gable ends.

Construction dates of the privy and crib dock are not known, but probably were built between 1920 and 1955. The privy (#291B) is a one-holer built ca. 1920 - 1941, and has a square glass window, a wood floor, and stone foundation. The crib dock ruin (#291C) measures approximately 20' x 8', and rests on a log cribbing with stone infill.

Figure 4.19. Plan view of Siefert Camp. Drawing by Dave Snyder, November, 1987.
CONNOLLY CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: 1912-1914

Four structures survive at the Connolly Camp: a cottage, guest house, crib dock, and privy. All have high integrity in all areas, except for the crib dock, which has been rebuilt. The Connollys were from Rockford, Illinois, and began coming to Isle Royale after hearing about it by Judge Dassler, and Dr. S.B. Langworthy, who both had homes on the northeast end Isle Royale. (Charles Parker Connolly, a Unitarian minister fished with the two men back in Lawrence, Kansas, where he had been the parson of a church). Beginning in the early 20th century, Connolly would close church in early June to prepare for his trip north to Isle Royale, departing around Labor Day. It took about a week to travel from Rockford to Tobin Harbor. During their earliest visits, the Connollys camped in the cove between Scoville Point and Dassler's Point. They used an old canvas army tent on a wooden platform floor, which was later used for overflow visitors. They built both their cottage and guest house between 1912 and 1914.

The buildings in the Connolly Camp are similar in design, form, materials, and workmanship. They are all one-story, gabled frame structures, sided with shiplap and painted, and are roofed with rolled asphalt. The buildings are set on, or rest directly on cedar posts, or bedrock. The Connolly cottage (#289) is average size for an early cottage, measuring approximately 27’ x 27’ (729 sq. ft.). Built on the edge of a cliff with the deck hanging out over the water, the cottage is the most recognizable structure in Tobin Harbor. It has ribbons of six-light windows, fixed, on several faces. The interior is unfinished, and has a hand pump and “California Cooler” in the kitchen. A new deck was added and the front porch windows were replaced in 1997. There is a woodshed behind the cottage. The shed-roofed privy (#290A) is in fair condition, and is similar to the other structures in siding.

Other structures contribute to the integrity of the site. The small, front-gable entry guest house (#290) is in fair to poor condition, measures 9’ x 9’ (81 sq. ft.), and is symmetrical in design. The six-panel door is centrally placed, and has fixed six-light windows to each side. The crib dock (#290B) is approximately 20’ long, has a stone-filled log cribbing, and was repaired by the Park Service in 1997.
Figure 4.20. Plan view of Connolly Camp. Sketch by Dena Sanford, 1995.
**KEMMER CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR**

**PERIOD: 1919-1921**

The Kemmer Camp has six surviving structures that date to the resort hey-day on Isle Royale: these include a residence, guest house, store house, boat house, privy, dock, concrete steps, and a peeled pole rail. The buildings are currently used as park housing, and the site has been upgraded with solar power, a water pump, and a modern, floating dock. The structures retain high integrity in all areas, although the store house and dock are in only fair condition and have medium integrity of material due to deterioration. Elizabeth Kemmer, a St. Paul native and school teacher for twenty years, had first come to Isle Royale in 1928 to visit with her friend Elizabeth Underwood. The two women rented the cabin for several years before buying it.

The buildings at the Kemmer Camp are typical, single-story frame structures, with either shiplap, vertical board, or droplap siding, all with cornerboards. The store house (#275) is a combination of shiplap and vertical log construction. Most buildings are gabled, except for the privy and store house, which are shed-roofed. Roofing is rolled asphalt. The buildings are supported by cedar post on rock or poured concrete. Residential structures have screen doors. Only the Kemmer residence is painted, and there is not much uniformity of design, materials, or workmanship between buildings. Local fishermen Art Mattson and his brother constructed the guest house (#273), and also repaired the Kemmer cottage after a fire in 1956. The brothers also built an addition that almost doubled the building’s original size.

The Kemmer residence (#272) was built between 1919-1921 by Gustav Sigismund is in good condition. Located on an exposed, rocky site, the cottage is an asymmetrical, gabled structure measuring 20’ x 37’ (740 sq. ft.). Siding is droplap, and windows are one-over-one, used both horizontally and vertically. The interior has three chimneys, Franklin stove heat, hand pumped water, and a “California Cooler.”

The guest house (#273), was typical of adjunct cottages built by summer residents for their guests—it is cozy but has no frills. Built in 1920-1921 (or possibly in 1938), the structure is in good condition and measures 18’ x 8’ (144 sq. ft.). It has stove heating and a dry sink. The store house (#275) was built ca. 1920-1921, (or possibly in 1938) and is in fair condition. It is a shed-roofed, two-room structure measuring 6’ x 13’ (78 sq. ft.), and has the most eclectic combination of materials of all the camp buildings.

The boat house (#274), was built ca. 1920-1921, or possibly in 1938, by Mr. Manthey, the same carpenter that built the Savage boat house. It measures approximately 10’ x 20’ (200 sq. ft.), has an eight-light window, and double doors on one side. The associated dock is in poor condition. The Kemmer privy (#272A) was built ca. 1938 and is in fair condition.
Figure 4.21. Plan view of Kemmer Camp. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
The Beard Camp has three surviving structures: a cottage, storage building, and privy. All structures have high integrity in all areas, and structures are in fair to good condition. The camp is located on a small island in Tobin Harbor, and is part of the summer community that formed in Tobin Harbor during the early 20th century. The camp was initiated by the Greene family, who were from Omaha.

The cottage (#280) and storage building (#281) were both built in 1918. There is some uniformity between the cottage and store house in that they are both simple, one-story gabled structures, with gable ends both similarly oriented. Materials are dissimilar: The cottage is beaded lap siding with corner boards, and the store house is vertical log construction. The cottage measures approximately 26' x 24' (624 sq. ft.), has a shed-roofed front porch, picket skirtting under the porch, a porch railing, and panel shutters. It rests on log piers and has rolled asphalt roofing. The cottage has no electricity or plumbing.

The storage building (#281) is a vertical log building with pole quarter rounds, and measures approximately 11' x 9' (99 sq. ft.). The structure is in good condition. It has deep overhanging eaves, vertical log siding, rests on log and stone piers, and has rolled asphalt roofing. The privy (#280A) is newer construction, and has plywood siding. It is in fair condition, and is a typical 4' x 4' and a shed roof with corrugated fiberglass covering. It is not known whether the privy is in its original location.

Figure 4.22. Plan view of Beard Camp. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
EDWARDS CAMP ON EDWARDS ISLAND, TOBIN HARBOUR

PERIOD: EARLY 1900s

The Edwards Camp retains five buildings: a cottage, dining room, privy, store house, all of which are in good condition, and have high degree of integrity in all areas except for setting, which has medium integrity due to the overgrowth of vegetation. "The Gem," (#575) is a 10' x 15' cottage associated with the Edwards Camp, and is on its own small island near Edwards Island. It is also in good condition, and has high integrity in all areas but feeling, location, setting, and association, which are medium due to overgrown vegetation.

The Reverend Maurice D. Edwards, a Presbyterian minister in St. Paul, and his family, were among the first to establish a summer residence in Tobin Harbor. Exact dates of construction of the structures are not known, but photographs show the main cottage's existence prior to 1919. The date of construction is probably closer to the early days of the first decade.

The structures at the Edwards Camp have Craftsman style influences, with wide overhanging eaves and beveled rafter tails. The visual unity of the three main structures—cottage, store house, and dining room—suggest that they were constructed at the same time, by a single builder, or constructed under design review. They are all one-story frame structures with hipped or pyramidal-hipped roofs, droplap siding and corner boards, have the same six-light windows in sets of one or two, and are all painted. Roofing material is also uniform, and is asphalt shingle. The Edwards cottage (#282) measures approximately 20' x 28' (560 sq. ft.), has six-light windows in sets of two, and 12-lights flanking the door. There is a deep front porch that was formerly screened, wood steps, and a large exterior cobblestone chimney. Skirting is picket, and the cottage is set on log piers and brick.

The store house (#283) is a one story hipped roof structure measuring approximately 10' x 18' (180 sq. ft.) sheathed in droplap siding with corner boards. The roof is extended at one end to cover an open porch; the old roofline is visible underneath. The buildings has a six-light window, an open porch with a wood floor, and is supported by cornerstones. The dining room (#282) is an open frame, and was once screened. There is a diagonal upper bracing at corner posts, a wood floor. The privy (#282B) is a gabled structure similar in materials to the other buildings. It has an asymmetrically-placed, vertical board door, and one four-light window.
Figure 4.23. Plan view of Edwards Camp. Sketch by Dena Sanford, 1995.
MERRITT CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: 1905 - 1949
The Merritt Camp has high/medium integrity and retains a cottage, three guest cottages, privy, woodshed, and dock. The camp originally included a boat house, which is no longer extant. All surviving buildings are in good condition, and have high integrity in all areas, except for the association of the Merritt Cottage. Alfred Merritt was from Duluth, and discovered Isle Royale as a 19 year old deck hand in 1866. He later worked at the Island Mine Company in Siskiwit Bay, and began camping at Blake Point, on what is now known as “Merritt Island.” He began buying Isle Royale islands in 1908—shortly after the recently-surveyed islands had been made available for purchase through auction in Marquette, Michigan. Merritt bought a number of islands in Tobin, Duncan, and Rock Harbors, and in Siskiwit Bay. With his family’s help, Merritt built his first house on Merritt Island in 1911.

The earliest buildings and the Merritt Camp are the Merritt cottage (#299), the “Parsonage” (#299D), and “Moose Manor” (#271). These were all built between 1905 and 1910, and are gabled frame buildings with beaded board or droplap siding. The cottage measures 14’ x 35’ (490 sq. ft.), and has a ribbon of six-light windows. It has a painted, frame interior. “Moose Manor” guest house is approximately 13’ x 12’ (156 sq. ft.). Three buildings were moved to the camp from other sites; two guest cabins, one from Bailey’s Island, and one from Minong Island, and the privy, which was also moved from Bailey’s Island. The Merritt Camp is significant as a member of the Tobin Harbor historic district, and also for its association with Alfred Merritt, who was a long-time resident, associated with the mining history of Isle Royale, as well as the recreational history. The Merritt Camp, along with the Stack/Wolbrink Camp, represent some of the earliest private camp developments at Isle Royale. The acquisitive evolution of the Merritt camp displays the self-sufficient nature of the island’s summer residents, and the tradition of “recycling” buildings as a construction technique.

STACK/WOLBRINK CAMP ON MINONG ISLAND, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: 1900-1906
The Stack/Wolbrink Camp is a good example of an early 20th century wealthy midwesterner’s private wilderness camp—as a retreat that provided conveniences and sophisticated surroundings in a wilderness setting. The Stack/Wolbrink Camp has four surviving structures: a cottage, guest house, privy, and stone retaining wall. The structures all have high integrity and are in good condition. The original owner, civil war veteran General John Roberts, began resorting at Tobin Harbor around 1900. Gen. Roberts was from Kansas, and a representative to the Kansas State Legislature. Fred and Florence Stack first summered on Isle Royale in 1919. They were from Omaha, Nebraska, were Fred was a successful undertaker. In Omaha,
the Stacks lived next door to the H.L. Beard family, who summered on Isle Royale, as did Mr. Beard's sister, Mrs. "Omaha" Smith. The three families—Stacks, Beards, and Smiths—spent their summers together in Tobin Harbor. The Stacks summered on Isle Royale each summer for about six weeks, and first rented the Roberts' cottage, which was owned by R.W. Emersons, in 1920, and then purchased it in 1926.

The Stack/Wolbrink Camp is sited at the tip of a low, flat rock on the easternmost tip of Minong Island. The two residential buildings are simple, one-story gabled and hipped-roof structures with droplap siding and cornerboards, interior chimneys, and rolled asphalt roofing. Both have deep porches: the main cottage is enclosed, with a ribbon of one-over-one windows on three sides (other windows are six-light, exterior opening awning), and the guest cottage has an open porch. Both buildings have vertical picket skirting below porches, and are set on cedar posts. Both are painted, and present a unified and refined appearance, unlike the more eclectic collection of buildings at the Snell and Kemmer Camps.

The Stack cottage (#287) was built ca. 1900-1906, and measures approximately 32' x 40' (1280 sq. ft.). It is actually more of a house than a cottage, and consists of a large central living room, kitchen, dining room, four bedrooms, and a large enclosed porch. Decorative details include a Craftsman style door and a decorative screen door. The cottage interior is well preserved, and retains many original furnishings and artifacts, including an oil lamp chandelier, a "California Cooler," and Art Deco linoleum.

The Stack guest house (#288), affectionately called the "Wee Hoose" by Mr. Stack, was built between 1900-1920. It measures approximately 28' x 12' (336 sq. ft.), which is large for an Isle Royale guest house. The interior has tongue and groove paneling, and one-over-one windows. The privy (#287) is typical, but has linoleum flooring. A 3' tall x 15' long dry-laid stone retaining wall (#287B) parallels the coast. The property originally had two docks, one on the north side of the property, near their boathouse, and another on the south side—this was the "fish dock," where fish were cleaned. There was originally a trail through the woods from the Stack cottage to the Minong Lodge resort, which was the center of Tobin Harbor activity.
Stack / Wolbrink Camp  
Tobin Harbor

Stack/Wolbrink  
Boathouse  
# 286 (gone)

Stack/Wolbrink  
Guesthouse  
# 288

Stack/Wolbrink  
Cottage  
# 287

remaining cabin  
from Minong Lodge

Service Dock  
Tobin Harbor

Figure 4.24. Plan view of Stack/Wolbrink Camp. Drawing by Dave Snyder, December, 1987.
OTHER TOBIN HARBOR PRIVATE RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES
Four additional properties exist in the Tobin Harbor District. These include the Gale Camp, How Camp, Dassler, Camp, and Savage Camp. These properties contain buildings that typical of Isle Royale private camps, but retain somewhat less integrity (high/medium, rather than high). However, all five properties are important has components within the Tobin Harbor historic district.

GALE CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: 1937 - 1940s
The Gale Camp retains a cottage, guest cottage, tool shed / wash house, privy, and dock. All but the tool shed / wash house are in good condition. The Gale boat house is gone. Sited on a small island and screened in part by vegetation, the Gale Camp was owned by Alfreda Gale, a widow from St. Louis, Missouri, who began coming to Isle Royale in the 1930s. The Gale buildings are nearly all one-story, gabled, frame structures; the privy has a hipped roof. The two residential structures have log veneer siding—revealing them as more recent additions to Tobin Harbor than most of the other camps. The Gale cottage (#276) is larger than the guest cottage (#277A), measuring approximately 35 x 25' (875 sq. ft.), while the guest cottage is 12 x 17' (204 sq. ft.). The tool shed / wash house (#277) is approximately 102 sq. feet. Details of the Gale cottage include a center stone chimney, stone fireplace, and six-lights windows in sets of two. Guest house windows are one-over-one. The Gale Camp's overall integrity of setting and association suffer due to the loss of associated buildings.

HOW CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR
PERIOD: PRE-1915 - 1937
The How Camp is sited on a small, narrow island in Tobin Harbor, and has two surviving buildings: a cottage and a guest cabin. The camp has high/medium integrity, and structures have high integrity in all areas, except for the guest cabin’s integrity of materials and workmanship. The Hows came from Duluth, where Mr. How was a successful insurance man. He had first come to Isle Royale as a 16 year old boy. He later purchased the small island because Mrs. How thought there would be no snakes on such a small island.

The How cottage (#278) was built in 1937 and is in good condition, while the older guest cabin (#279), which was built prior to 1915, is in fair to poor condition. Both buildings are simple one-story gabled frame structures. The How cottage is 470 sq. ft., has a full-width front porch, thin log veneer siding, and log veneer skirting. Details include a ribbon of six-light casement windows in sets of two, French doors, and a 15-light window on the porch side overlooking the lake. Board and batten vertical boards with scalloped end in gable ends. The guest cabin is equipped with a hand water pump, has no utilities, and is heated by woodstove. It is finished in knotty pine paneling and has pine
floors. The guest cabin is 235 sq. ft., with a shallow pitch gable roof, small front porch, and drop lap siding. The cabin originally had a dock out front. Although it is lacking integrity in some areas, the How Camp is important as part of the Tobin Harbor historic district, and like the Gale Camp, the use of log veneer represents the evolution in perceptions "proper" wilderness cabin construction.

**DASSLER CAMP ON SCOVILLE POINT, TOBIN HARBOR**
**PERIOD: 1905 - LATE 1920s**
The Dassler Camp is sited high on a picturesque bluff on Scoville Point, overlooking Tobin Harbor, toward the east. It has several surviving structures: a cottage, guest house, boathouse, and privy, all in good condition but the privy, with is in fair to poor condition. The camp has high /medium integrity, due to the medium integrity of the altered Dassler cottage's design, materials, and workmanship. The Dasslers were one of the first families to camp in Tobin Harbor. Judge C.F.W. Dassler was from Leavenworth, Kansas, and was friends with Rev. Connolly and the Langworthys (in Rock Harbor). Dassler bought the land in 1902 from a defunct mining interest. The Dassler residential buildings are all one-story gabled structures. The cottage was built in 1905-1911, is 780 sq. ft., and has asphalt shingle siding. The guest house is 192 sq. ft., and has droplap siding with cornerboards. Windows in both structures are six-light and four-light. The boathouse (176) is in good condition, and has asphalt siding over horizontal boards, with corner boards. It has four-light windows in sets of two, and two large doors on the gable end that open to the dock. The Dassler Camp is important as one of the earliest camps in the Tobin Harbor historic district.

**SAVAGE CAMP, TOBIN HARBOR**
**PERIOD: 1930 - 1935**
The Savage Camp retains only the a boat house and a storage shed, which are in poor condition. The camp has medium integrity, due to loss of other primary buildings, such as residences. The boat house is large by Isle Royale standards, measuring 36' x 37', and was used by both the Merritt and Gale families. Although only two structures remain, the property is important as a surviving structure in the Tobin Harbor District, and one of the few surviving examples of a boat house at Isle Royale.

**BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLES OF PRIVATE CAMPS, ROCK HARBOR**
**RALPH HOUSE, ROCK HARBOR**
**PERIOD: 1930, AND 1992-93**
The Ralph Camp has two surviving structures: a house and a water pump house, which is newer construction. Both are in good condition. The Ralph house retains high integrity of location, setting, association and feeling, but only medium integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The Ralph Camp is one of the last three surviving private recreation properties in Rock
Harbor (out of seven or more) that were built during the hey-day of the resort era on Isle Royale.

The Ralph house (#36) was built in 1930, is a one-story, gabled structure with droplap siding. Two sets of 15-light beveled glass French doors and two sets of 15-light windows are on the front face of the house. The building has a full-width screened porch. Roofing is rolled asphalt. The building has one-over-one windows, and the exterior brick chimney is flanked with four-light windows. The interior has wood floors, heat, and electrical service. Some remodeling was done in to the kitchen and bathroom, and an addition was added to the rear.

The pump house (#36A) has log veneer siding, a shingle roof, and a poured concrete pad foundation. It has a double vertical board door, and board and batten in the gable end. Older six-light and one-light horizontal windows exist on the eaves sides.

Davidson Camp on Davidson Island, Rock Harbor
Period: 1922
Only the Davidson house (#25) remains at the Davidson Camp. The house is located near the site of the former Tourists' Home Resort, is in good condition, and has high integrity in all areas but feeling and association, due to the lack of related buildings and structures. (The Davidson Camp originally had a pump house, dock, and possibly additional structures.) Isle Royale fisherman Erick Johnson started the small-scale Tourists' Home resort in 1902 on what was then known as Johnson Island. Johnson's resort had a large dock, main house, dining house, and several 10' x 12' sleeping cottages. In the 1910s, Johnson sold the resort to the Davidson family of St. Paul, who built the present house c. 1922. Many of the small resort cottages were bought and moved by Tobin's Harbor Resort (the Minong Lodge) to be used as sleeping cabins.

The Davidson house is a two-story, gabled structure with flared eaves. It is urban in appearance, has Colonial Revival styling, and shows Revivalesque influences. It has a stone foundation, and a new asphalt shingle roof. Measuring approximately 65' x 27', it is largest surviving residential structure on the island. It has beveled lap siding, a mortar stone foundation, large exterior stone chimney at the gable end, with "1922" written in small stones in a concrete panel inset. Windows are one-over-one double hung, placed singly, in sets of two, three, and four. Shed roof dormers with shingle siding flank the cross gable. The twelve-room interior has tongue-and-groove yellow pine floors, knotty pine horizontal board paneling, a peeled pole stair railing, and wrought iron hardware. Folding panel doors open to the living room, which has a large stone fireplace, stone hearth, and a half-log mantel. Some of the Davidson House furniture was salvaged from the Belle Isle Resort and is in good condition.
The Davidson House is important as a good example of an Isle Royale house. The application of an urban design in a wilderness setting represents one end of a spectrum of building types built by summer recreationalists at Isle Royale.

OTHER ROCK HARBOR DISTRICT PROPERTIES

WARREN CAMP, ROCK HARBOR
PERIOD: 1907 - 1934
The Warren Camp has only one surviving structure which currently serves as the Rock Harbor Ranger Station (#171). It is in good condition, and has high integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship, but has low integrity of association, feeling and setting due to the absence of associated structures and changes in the Rock Harbor resort area. Built ca. 1907 as a storage building, it is a one-story, gabled structure with droplap siding, and has nine-light and six-light windows. The building was used as a sleeping cabin in the late 1920s. It has approximately 280 sq. ft., which is large for a an Isle Royale storage building.

FARMER CAMP, ROCK HARBOR
PERIOD: 1930 - 1938
The Farmer Camp retains three residential structures, and has medium integrity as a private camp. The buildings are in good condition, and the Farmer house (#35) has high integrity in all areas but feeling. The other two buildings have medium integrity in all areas but location, with remains high. The three are all simple frame structures, with gabled or pyramidal roofs, and are sided in droplap or vertical board siding.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIVATE RESORT COLONIES AND COMPOUNDS
Private resort colonies and compounds on Isle Royale differed from the informal and highly social communities that formed in Tobin and Rock Harbors. Both colonies and compounds were created by one wealthy individual who exerted control over building style, design, materials, workmanship, and location, which resulted in a unified cluster of recreational buildings. The private resort colony differed from the private compound in that a colony existed as a group of individuals invited by an owner or association to build a summer residence within a privately or jointly-owned area. Colonies often consisted of individuals who shared common interests. The only private colony on Isle Royale is the Barnum Colony on Barnum Island in Washington Harbor, created by millionaire grain merchant George Barnum in 1902. Occupancy was by invitation only, as opposed to the informal harbor communities, which were created over time, through informal association.

The private compound differed from the private resort colony in that it had just one primary residence for the owner, and guest cottages for visitors. The McGath and McPherren properties are Isle Royale’s only example of a private compound. Like the
Barnum Colony, the McGath Compound was created by a wealthy individual, and buildings were built with uniformity of design, materials, and workmanship. The private compound had similarities with the standard resort: in addition to the primary residence, there were residential cottages, privies, a separate dining/main hall, bath house, boat houses, woodsheds, storage buildings, and docks. The McGath Compound even had servant's quarters built on a separate island (the present McPherren Camp) that were similar in design, materials, and workmanship to the main compound buildings. The McGath Compound is much like—although on a smaller scale—to the "wilderness camps" created by rich industrialists in Upper Michigan at the turn of the century.

**BARNUM COLONY ON BARNUM ISLAND, WASHINGTON HARBOR**
**PERIOD: EARLY 1900s - 1920**

The Barnum Colony on Barnum Island has a high degree of integrity, and was one of the earliest recreational developments on Isle Royale. Barnum Island retains seventeen historic structures: six residential cottages, (not including the Johns' Hotel, and Johns' log cabin), four privies (not including the Johns' double privy), two boat houses, a woodshed, and a smoke house. A communal dining room located near the old Johns Hotel is no longer extant. Most of the structures are in good condition, and are associated with millionaire George Barnum's private resort colony. Two buildings, the Johns' Hotel (#351) and the double privy (#351A) date to the early 1890s, and are significant as the first Isle Royale resort development, and have been nominated to the National Register. The Johns' log cabin (#343) and Andrews small log cabin (#345) were originally associated with John F. Johns and also date to the early 1890s, but the Andrews small log cabin was later incorporated into the Barnum Colony and used as a private cottage.

George Barnum was one of the first to establish his own private resort colony on Isle Royale. Barnum, a millionaire grain merchant from Duluth, first visited the island in 1895. On a visit in 1889, he stayed at the John's Hotel, and on subsequent visits stayed in a cottage at the west end of the island. Before Barnum bought the island from Johns, he requested that Johns and his son build him a small cabin, which Barnum used for a few years with his family. After the sale of the island in 1902, a larger cabin was built for Barnum on the western end of the island. Barnum then invited several friends to have their own cabins built, using his carpenter, Ole Daniels of Duluth. Within a few years the island had cabins for the Andrews, Ray, and Dunwoodie families. A common dining room was built near the old John's log cabins at the eastern end of the island. Barnum Island had become a busy summer colony by the 1920s.

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81 Gale and Gale, 106.
Barnum's hired carpenter, Ole Daniels, built most of the frame structures on the island. Five of these were built between 1903 and 1905: the Barnum cottage (#344), woodshed (#355), and privy (#344A); and the Dunwoodie cottage (#350) and privy (#350A). During the 1920s Daniels built five additional buildings for Barnum: the Ray cottage (#354) and privy (#354A), and the two Andrews' cottages (#352, and #353) and privy (#352A). Both boat houses—the 1910 large boat house (#348) and the 1933 small boat house (#349)—were designed by George Barnum. The five frame residential cottages are all approximately the same size, approximately 32' x 32' (1024 sq. ft.), with the Barnum cottage being slightly larger at 34' x 36' (1296 sq. ft.). Buildings have six-light casement windows, and the Dunwoodie cottage (#350) has a stained-glass window in the attic gable.

Most of the structures within the Barnum colony show a uniformity of design, materials, and workmanship, excluding the earlier John's structures, which are horizontal notched log construction. Even the Privies are uniform in design: all four associated with the Barnum colony have gabled roofs, droplap siding with cornerboards, and four-panel doors with black glass doorknobs. The resort cottages also display a continuity of design and materials, and are all one-story, have either pyramidal flared hip roofs or low-pitch gabled-rooms with gabled dormers, and are all roofed with rolled asphalt. Many buildings are sheathed with droplap siding with cornerboards. The only building that deviates from the use of droplap siding is the Large Boat House, which is vertical log construction. In contrast, the Small Boat House is sheathed in the droplap siding, and does not match the larger structure.

The Barnum Colony is the only private resort colony on Isle Royale, and represents the early private resort and recreational development at the turn of the century. It is illustrative of a summer colony developed by a wealthy Isle Royale summer resident, and its structures convey the original configuration, design, materials, and workmanship that show the hand of one craftsman. The survival of the Johns' Hotel and other related log buildings gives the site further importance as the earliest Isle Royale resort.
RESORT AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Figure 4.25. Plan view of Barnum Island Colony. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
The McGath Compound, located at Crystal Cove on the northeast end of Amygdaloid Island, was originally built as a private resort compound by the McGath family of Omaha in the early 1920s. During the boom of the tourist industry at Isle Royale in the 1920s, George W. McGath, a principal of the Sheridan Coal Company, purchased land at Crystal Cove and built a large private resort compound for himself and his family. (The compound has been said to have cost more than $40,000 to build, and was sold by McGath's estate to the Nixon family of Omaha in the early 1930s for about $2,500, who sold it to the government in the late 1930s at a profit.) The McGath compound included several buildings and an elaborate system of boardwalks. The McGaths, both large people, had three oversized bathtubs installed at the island, and a 110' passenger yacht. The National Park Service acquired the McGath Compound in 1939, and in 1958 the property was leased by the park to Milford and Myrtle Johnson, who moved there from Star Island in Rock Harbor. The Johnsons used the property as a commercial fishery.

Both compounds have high integrity, retain many of the original structures, the majority of which are in good condition. The McGath property has a high degree of integrity as a private resort compound, and many of the original resort structures survive, including the McGath residence, two identical guest cabins, a main lodge (used by the Johnsons as a residence), a boat house ruin, dock and crib ruin, generator house, and sections of the old boardwalk system. The presence of the generator/pump house, and lack of privy in the compound attest to the opulence of the McGath Compound.

The buildings in the McGath Compound are all log construction, and were probably built by the same individual. The same type of log construction exists on Captain Kidd Island, in the McPherren Compound, where the builder has been identified as Emil Anderson. Accounts name Mr. McGath as the designer of several of the buildings in the McPherren Compound. The McGath resort buildings are a peeled log, saddle-notched construction method, tightly filled with quarter rounds—identical construction to that of the McPherren Compound buildings.

83 Gale and Gale, 133-134.
Additionally, the sleeping cabins are identical at both sites, further substantiating the probability of one designer and one builder. Together, the buildings at both compounds provide a good example of Northern European log construction.

The McGath residence measures 31' x 21', the two guest cabins are identical and measure a generous 25' x 15', and the main lodge (used as central dining cabin) is a one-story, U-shaped building, and measures approximately 61' x 36'.

Several structures at the McGath Compound are unlike the log buildings in materials, but similar in design. These include the storage house/net house/blacksmith shop (#570), the boat house ruin (#568), and the smoke house (#563). These three buildings are all one-story frame structures with droplap siding, and all but the smokehouse (which has a shed roof), have the same hipped-roof as the log structures in the compound. Both the storage house and boat house date to the early 1920s, as may the smoke house, judging from the similarity of siding. The boat house and storage house have low integrity of materials and are in poor condition (the boat house has collapsed). The smoke house is in fair condition.
Figure 4.26. Plan view of McGath Compound. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
McPherren Camp on Captain Kidd Island, Amygdaloid Channel

Period: ca. 1915 - 1930s, 1934 - 1940s

The McPherren Compound on Captain Kidd Island (a 20.6 acre island in the Amygdaloid Channel) has eleven surviving structures, most retaining high integrity. These include a cottage, three sleeping cabins, a boat house ruin and winch, bath house, tool shed, privy, woodshed, crib docks, and a flagpole. Most structures are original to the compound, although some were moved from the McGath Compound (the bath house, and possibly the sleeping cabin #1) and Clay Island (sleeping cabin #3). After 1934, the McGath's Captain Kidd Island compound became the McPherren's private "camp." Under the McPherren's ownership, buildings were recycled from other areas, and additional buildings were built, including the 1930s McPherren cottage (#300), and 1940s boat house (#301C).

The McPherrens have traveled to Captain Kidd Island from Omaha and lately, California, each summer since 1934 for hay fever relief. The McPherrens brought in dirt by boat to create a flat, grassy lawn area around the main cabin and the sleeping cabins. The McPherren Cottage and the three sleeping cabins are all of the same type of saddle-notched log construction as those in the McGath Compound, and are all one-story, with either gabled or pyramidal hipped-roofs. Roofing is mostly rolled asphalt.

The architectural style, materials, and workmanship of the log buildings are similar to those at the McGath Compound. As stated previously, the majority of buildings at the McPherren Compound are saddle-notched log construction built by Emil Anderson. However, one log building, the McPherren cottage (#300), was built in 1935-1936 by Wayne and William R. McPherren. This building is a one-story, one-room gabled structure, measuring approximately 24' x 14', and exhibits different design and workmanship than the earlier log structures, which have pyramidal hipped and hipped-roofs, and a tighter saddle notching used in the joinery technique.

Like the McGath Compound, the McPherren Compound has structures that are frame construction: sleeping cabin #1 (#301A), and the boat house (#301C). Sleeping cabin #1 was built by Emil Anderson ca. 1920, and is a one-story frame structure with a pyramidal hip roof, and a flat-roofed addition. Siding on both the original building and the addition is shiplap. The original pyramidal section measures only 8' x 8', and has two large one-over-one windows to the right of the entry. The building was moved, possibly from the McGath Compound, in 1940, and may have been built to serve a non-residential purpose. A second addition was added to the building ca. 1975. The bath house was also moved from Amygdaloid Island in 1940, and was originally part of the McGath Compound.
Sleeping cabin #3 (#301B) and was built ca. 1916-1917, and was brought from Clay Island around 1960. It is quite similar in design to the other structures built by Emil Anderson, being of the same log construction and pyramidal form as those in both compounds. It is smaller than the other log sleeping cabins, however, and measures only 12' x 12'. The boat house (#301C) was built between 1940 and 1945, and is a one-story gabled structure built of salvaged boards. It is unlike the other structures in the compound.
Together, the McGath Compound and the McPherren Compound are illustrative of a wealthy midwesterner's private resort development, built at Isle Royale during the hey day of its tourism industry. The uniformity and integrity of the design, materials, and workmanship, as well as the setting, association, and feeling is strong in both of the compounds, and together they exemplify the desire of business tycoons to escape from their hectic worlds to the isolation and rustic opulence offered by Isle Royale's private islands. The McGath and McPherren Compounds are also important as the last surviving examples of this type of private resort establishment on Isle Royale, and provide good examples of European American log construction. The use of logs also represents the owner's decision to create a cohesive, "rustic," wilderness camp, even though other developments of the time were largely built using frame construction and milled lumber.
Isle Royale Logging Sites, 1936 Fire Burn Area, and CCC Camps

Figure 5.1. Map of Isle Royale logging sites, 1936 fire burn area, and CCC camps. Map from Gale and Gale, 140.
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION NUMBERS: None

OVERVIEW
The idea for Isle Royale National Park arose after the close of the copper mining era, during the height of the island's tourism industry. In the early 1920s a number of the island's summer residents spearheaded the idea of a national park on Isle Royale. Over the next 20 years, state and federal legislators, journalists, scientists, scholars, and naturalists followed suit and advocated the preservation of Isle Royale wilderness by designating it a national park. The actualization of the park was made possible through the assistance of President Roosevelt's public works programs, which were created in 1933 and operated until 1942. As part of these programs, between 1935 and 1941 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) recruits were commissioned to build trails, park facilities, and fight fires on Isle Royale.

Isle Royale was officially dedicated a national park on August 27, 1946, six years after title to all lands had been secured. In the mid-1950s, after ten years of operation, Isle Royale National Park received many improvements as part of the Mission 66 program. This work was initiated by Superintendent Conrad Wirth in an effort to update and improve national parkland facilities. The program was to create a "renaissance" for the nation's parklands, and would span a ten-year period, beginning in 1956 and ending in 1966, the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service. During this period, new paradigms of wilderness conservation were emerging, and in 1964 the Wilderness Act was passed. Concern over the preservation of Isle Royale’s wilderness would continue to grow as part of this movement, and the perseverance of environmental groups is reflected in the current management of Isle Royale National Park, where 99 percent of the land area is designated as "wilderness."

EARLY ADVOCATION FOR ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK
At the turn of the century, the majority of Isle Royale land was owned by several mining corporations, in particular the English-based Isle Royale Land Corporation (owners of the Wendigo Mine in Washington Harbor). After the failure of the Wendigo Mine in 1892, the Isle Royale Land Corporation held 84,000 acres of land of dubious value. In an effort to recoup some profit from their investment in the island, George H. Feldtmann, the corporation's agent, developed a "visionary scheme" that would benefit from the island's emerging tourist industry. Feldtmann's plan involved logging much of the island, but saving the most striking and picturesque locations for the development of a "pleasure-seekers' resort." The land corporation's logging plans
were only haltingly implemented, however, and Feldtmann’s grand plans for the Isle Royale resort were never actualized.\(^1\)

In 1909 the Island Copper Company of Houghton acquired the Isle Royale Land Corporation’s property, along with 10,000 additional acres purchased from other defunct mining firms. This acquisition increased the Island Copper Company’s holdings to over 92,000 acres—more than three-fourths of the island—and made it the main property holder of Isle Royale. The Island Copper Company did not log or attempt to exploit their holdings, and officials from the Michigan Conservation Department began to view the island as a potential game refuge. In 1910, the Conservation Department even stocked ten whitetail deer at the west end of the island.\(^2\)

Many of the Isle Royale summer residents became concerned in 1922, however, when they discovered that the Island Copper Company was planning to sell 65,000 acres of its Isle Royale holdings to the Minnesota Forest Products Company of Duluth. The islanders feared that the Minnesota company would begin a pulp harvesting operation on the island and devastate their tranquil wilderness refuge. As a result, they formed the Citizens Committee of Isle Royale, which sought to deter logging interests and other commercial development on the island in an effort to ensure the continued conservation of Isle Royale’s wilderness.\(^3\)

The Citizens Committee of Isle Royale Committee members began to work politically to oppose the pulp harvesting. With the help of John Baird, Director of the Michigan Conservation Department, the group solicited the assistance of Albert Stoll, Jr., outdoor editor for the \textit{Detroit News}. Stoll had visited Isle Royale in 1921 with David R. Jones of the Michigan Conservation Department, and the two men had discussed the concept of a state park on the island. In December 1921 Stoll wrote the first of many editorials advocating that Isle Royale become a nature preserve, and encouraged other \textit{Detroit News} journalists to write features on Isle Royale, as well.\(^4\)

With his promotional writing about Isle Royale’s unequalled wilderness qualities, Stoll succeeded in capturing the interest of U.S. Congressman Louis C. Crampton of Michigan, who was also


\(^3\) Ibid., citing Ralph W. Emerson, Secretary Citizens Committee of Isle Royale to John Baird, Michigan Department of Conservation, 18 August 1922, Isle Royale Park Papers; D. Robert Hakala, \textit{Isle Royale Primeval Prince} (National Park Service, 1953), 38-9.

\(^4\) Ibid., 199, citing \textit{Detroit News} 3 December 1921; Little, “Island Wilderness,” 23.
Chairman of the Sub-committee of the Department of the Interior's House Public Lands Committee. Crampton in turn involved Stephen Mather, Director of the National Park Service, in the promotion of Isle Royale as a potential national park. Mather had been advocating the expansion of the National Park System, particularly in the eastern United States, where only Acadia National Park existed. Mather recommended that the National State Park Conference, a selection committee he created to screen potential parks, consider Isle Royale in their May 1922 meeting.  

Park advocates continued to promote their cause during 1923. Michigan Governor Alex Groesbeck announced his endorsement for a state park on Isle Royale, although State Conservation Department officials were hoping for federal action. The Island Copper Company agreed to donate 45,000 acres (and later offered an additional 21,000 acres) of its Isle Royale holdings for the establishment of a park, provided that the company could retain its mineral rights. The company also suggested that George Rupley of Minnesota Forest Products Company of Duluth be approached and requested to donate Isle Royale holdings as well.  

Stoll continued to work on the behalf of the Isle Royale park project. He sent representatives to visit with Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work in early 1924, and supplied both Secretary Work and National Park Service Director Stephen Mather with information concerning property ownership on Isle Royale. In March 1924, after further prodding from Stoll, Work convinced President Calvin Coolidge to withdraw federal lands from future public sale on Isle Royale. The Michigan Conservation Department followed suit, resolving to stop the sale of state lands on the island, and requesting that lands be transferred through legislation to the federal government for national park purposes.

Stoll's next move was to organize a tour to Isle Royale, in cooperation with the influential Detroit Board of Commerce, whose members had endorsed the national park concept for the island in June 1924. Stoll accompanied Secretary of Interior Work, National Park Service Director Mather, Postmaster General Harry S. New, Island Copper Company President Cole, Michigan Department of Conservation Chairman William H. Wallace, Minnesota Forest Products Company Chairman George Rupley, and Sierra Club President Francis Farquhar to Isle Royale. After the excursion, Mather had become a powerful ally in the

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6 Ibid., 200, citing Little, 27; Albert Stoll to Harry F. Harper, 16 October 1930, Isle Royale Park Papers.

7 Ibid., 201, citing Albert Stoll to Sec. of the Interior Hubert Work, 13 February 1924 and Isle Royale Park Papers; Hubert Work to Albert Stoll, 18 February 1924.
Royale National Park movement, exclaiming that Isle Royale's "size and grandeur surpassed my expectations. It would make the finest water and trail park I can think of."9

In order to acquire lands for national park purposes, federal regulations required that they be donated free of cost to the government. Stoll and his supporters worked for nearly five years developing the means to acquire all 120,000 acres on the island. The principal stumbling block was the Minnesota Forest Products Company. Chairman Rupley, who had a reputation of being a "hard trader," wanted $2,500,000 for the Duluth firm's Isle Royale lands, while other land owners, including the Island Copper Company, were willing to make arrangements to transferring their Isle Royale holdings in return for various non-cash favors.10

Stoll's promotional campaign for the creation of a park on Isle Royale, meanwhile, received added support as the 1920s came to an end. Interest in Isle Royale had developed in several academic-scientific communities. Respected archeologists from the Milwaukee Public Museum under E. F. McDonald and Burt A. Massee surveyed ancient copper mining pits in 1928. They then petitioned President Coolidge, requesting that he move to preserve the island's unique archeological, historical, and geological characteristics by transforming it into a national park or monument.11 Researchers of geology, zoology, and ethnology were initiated to the island by the University of Michigan in 1929, and overall public interest public interest in Isle Royale was heightened. Notable journalists, documentary filmmakers, naturalists, and photographers worked over the next few years to promote the natural beauty and wilderness qualities of the island, the recreational opportunities, and the value of conserving the island's educational opportunities.

The bill that would enable Isle Royale to become a national park was introduced by Congressman Louis C. Crampton of Michigan in February 1931, and was approved by the House on March 2, with the stipulation that the entire Isle Royale archipelago—not just the main island—would be included in the national park boundaries. Senator Arthur M. Vandenberg of Michigan (who had been a long-time supporter of the park idea when he was editor of the Grand Rapids Herald), introduced the companion Isle Royale park bill in the Senate, and as soon as it was approved,

8 Ibid., citing Little, 31.
9 Ibid., citing Detroit News, 18 June 1924.
substituted it for his own measure. The bill was unanimously approved on March 4, 1931, and President Herbert C. Hoover signed the Crampton-Vandenberg Bill the day after it cleared the Senate.  

The passing of the Crampton-Vandenberg Act marked the successful conclusion of nearly ten years of effort to create Isle Royale National Park. The archipelago now stood poised for a major shift in the course of its historical development. With the transfer to federal ownership in 1931, the National Park Service would control all development taking place on Isle Royale.  

The first requirement to create the Isle Royale National Park was the settlement of the private land donation issue (public monies could not be used to purchase Isle Royale property). Michigan legislators authorized the creation of an Isle Royale National Park Commission to facilitate property donations and land transfers. Many seasonal residents and property owners wanted to extend life lease rights to their children and grandchildren. The National Park Service resisted issuing such long-term rights, and the process of land transfers lasted more than a decade.  

The Great Depression slowed the implementation of the Isle Royale National Park project. With nearly one-third of the American work force unemployed by 1932 as a result of the stock market crash of 1929, the nation had more immediate concerns than the development of wilderness parks. States like Michigan that had strong agricultural and industrial economic bases were hit very hard by the depression. In Detroit, the production of automobiles was drastically reduced and almost 1.5 million people were in need of public assistance. The work of the Isle Royale National Park Commission languished during the early 1930s.  

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal gave hope to the nation, and introduced the possibility that federal funds might become available for Isle Royale park land acquisitions. Ironically, the Minnesota Forest Products Company served to further rekindle interest in the weakened Isle Royale project. In July 1934 a spokesman from the Minnesota and Ontario Paper

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12 Ibid., 203-204, citing Little, 39-40; Grand Rapids Press 8 May 1931; Congressional Record, 71st Congress, 3rd Session, 1931, 6792.  
13 Ibid., 204.  
14 Ibid., citing Little, 39-40; Grand Rapids Press 8 May 1931; Congressional Record, 71st Congress, 3rd Session, 1931, 6792.  
16 Ibid., 205, citing Little, 47.
Company contacted Governor William A. Comstock of Michigan. (The Minnesota Forest Products Company had been a subsidiary of the Minnesota and Ontario Paper Company, but had gone into receivership as a result of the Crash.) An infestation of spruce bud worms and other insect pests had broken out on Isle Royale, and the Minnesota and Ontario Paper Company was interested in selling 72,000 Isle Royale acres. The paper company requested that Michigan revive the Isle Royale National Park Commission so that a land sale could be negotiated. Shortly thereafter, the Consolidated Water and Power Company of Wisconsin Rapids began harvesting pulp on a property near Siskiwit Bay, which had been purchased from the Minnesota Forest Products Company.

Local citizens' action groups were incited to action by the timber cutting activities on Isle Royale. The Isle Royale National Park Association met in Escanaba in May 1935 to request federal economic assistance for the creation of the park. The Isle Royale National Park project drew widespread interest among Upper Peninsula civic and business organizations.

Because of the renewed interest in the Isle Royale National Park project, the Governor of Michigan reorganized the Isle Royale National Park Commission. E. G. Willemin, a federal agent with extensive experience in arranging land transfers in other eastern national parks, was introduced to members of the Commission by Albert Stoll in June 1935. Willemin played a key role in negotiating and obtaining lands for the island park.

**CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS AT ISLE ROYALE: 1935-1941**

In 1935 negotiations were initiated by the National Park Service for acquisition of Isle Royale private lands, and President Roosevelt approved the establishment of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps on the island, allocating $600,000 for the program. The CCC program was one of several federal work relief programs created as part of the New Deal, which provided social and economic opportunities, professional training and much-needed income to areas hit by the Great Depression. Between the years of 1933 to 1941, the CCC employed 102,814 young men in 42 camps located throughout Michigan. The Departments of War, Agriculture, Interior, and Labor acted together to recruit, house, feed, cloth, and care for thousands of enrollees in “what became one of the largest mobilizations of

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18 Little, 56; Detroit News, 8 May 1935.
20 Karamanski, et. al., 206, citing Little, 58; Detroit News, 28 June 1935; E. G. Willemin to Lewis H. Merritt, 19 August 1935, Merritt Family
manpower up to that point in American history. General and specific work plans were established by the agencies, which selected, organized, and administered the camps in a military-like manner.

Responsibilities of the CCC enrollees included forest fire prevention, flood control, and soil erosion containment; tree planting and implementing improvements to state and national parks and forests; eradicating insect pests; and wildlife management on federal lands. CCC volunteers were required to be between the ages of 18 and 35, stand five feet to six feet, eight inches tall, weigh at least 107 pounds, and have no less than three teeth. The federal treasury provided each individual with $30 per month ($25 of which was to be sent home), for no less than a six month enlistment period.

The CCC work was scheduled to begin on Isle Royale as soon as the National Park Service held title to the island's private lands. In turn, the National Park Service received a little more than a half-million dollars from the New Deal's National Industrial Recovery Act for purchase of lands for parks. On August 6, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Executive Order to appropriate $705,000 to be applied to Isle Royale Park land acquisition.

Federal acquisition of Isle Royale lands would prove to be a long and difficult process. Private property owners, and even those people who did not legally own property but had a history of land use on the island, were asked to donate or sell their holdings to the Park Service for one dollar per acre for mineral rights and four dollars per acre for surface rights for their lands. Approximate increases were allowed for structures and other improvements. Property owners were offered life leases in return for the donation of their properties. The inclusion of children and grandchildren onto life leases occurred in only three instances, to those few that were insistent, and sought legal counsel. Special Use Permits were offered to resort owners and fishermen. Many of the summer residents and fishermen accepted this offer, but the resort owners sold their property outright.

Papers, Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, University of Minnesota, Duluth, Box 32.
21 Karamanski, et. al., 208.
22 Ibid., 208-209, citing Charles A. Symon, We Can Do It: A History of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Michigan 1933-1942 (Escanaba, Mich., 1983), 12; Roger L. Rosentreter, "Roosevelt’s Tree Army, the Civilian Conservation Corps of Michigan," Michigan History May-June, 1986), 16-17; also see Charles A. Symon, The Civilian Conservation Corps: A New Deal Study (New York, 1967).

23 Little, 60; Detroit News, 28 June 1935; E. G. Willemin to Lewis H. Merritt, 19 August 1935, Merritt Family Papers, Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, University of Minnesota, Duluth, Box 32.
24 Karamanski, et. al., 207.
In planning for improvements and facilities on Isle Royale, the National Park Service consulted with University of Michigan zoologist Adolph Murie. Murie visited Isle Royale in June 1935 and recommended that no new trails be cleared by the CCC, and all efforts be made to "guard against any sort of development which will reduce space or increase travel." He also recommended that forest fires be allowed to occur on Isle Royale, but this idea was rejected, and instead, an aggressive anti-forest fire point of view was adopted. Interestingly, since 1935 many of Murie's concepts have guided park service management practices.

A follow-up committee defined specific CCC projects for the 1935 season. Projects were to include clearing the fire-prone timber slashings left by the George W. Mead Company's timber cutting operations near Siskiwit Bay, erecting navigational aids, initiating wildlife management, and erecting CCC base camps. With these goals hurriedly set, nearly two hundred CCC enrollees and four officers came ashore at Senter Point in August 1935 to create Camp Siskiwit, the first of the three Isle Royale CCC camps. Camp Siskiwit (1935-1940) was built near the Mead logging camp.

Over the next six seasons, two more temporary CCC camps were built to house enrollees. These were located at Rock Harbor at the Daisy Farm location (CCC Camp Rock Harbor, 1936-1941), and at Washington Harbor at the old Wendigo Mine site (CCC Camp Windigo, 1940-1941). Working from these base camps and at smaller "satellite" camps, projects would be implemented by CCC enrollees at several locations around the island, including Windigo, Caribou Island, Mott Island, and Rock Harbor. The CCC crews constructed Park Service administrative buildings, employee housing, recreational facilities, and also worked on trail development, the construction of docks, campgrounds, fire towers, and day markers that were used as navigational aids. Additionally, the recruits conducted wildlife surveys, caught island moose for mainland repopulation projects, and fought forest fires.

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26 Ironically, since 1935 many of Murie's concepts have guided park service management practices.
27 Karamanski, et. al., 209.
28 Gale and Gale, 147.
Figure 5.2. CCC Camp Siskiwit in Siskiwit Bay, 1935. Photo from Gale and Gale, 146.
Figure 5.3. CCC Camp Rock Harbor at Daisy Farm, ca. 1936. Photo from Gale and Gale, 147.
The Isle Royale CCC camps were designed for seasonal occupation. The CCC enrollees on Isle Royale were not provided with the usual social, physical, and intellectual outlets and activities that other CCC operations provided for recruits. For example, enrollees on the mainland often had access to a nearby town. Also, camps occasionally held dances, and brought in young local women to socialize with the recruits. The camps often constructed fields for baseball and football games. In contrast, transportation from Isle Royale to Houghton, Michigan, was unreliable, and the distance so great that the volunteers lived simple lives and were lucky to leave the island once a month.

The park's wilderness management doctrine restricted the construction of the standard recreational facilities such as baseball and football fields, whereas Isle Royale activities were limited to horseshoe pitching, hiking, archery, and water sports. Additionally, most activities took place outside, as there were no large buildings for indoor recreation. Educational opportunities were similar to most of the other CCC camps. Recruits received vocational rather than academic training, and were taught mechanical drawing, radio operation, photography, typing, and nautical skills. Many recruits would obtain good jobs upon their discharge from the corps.

By September of 1935, the CCC park projects were initiated on Isle Royale. During their first season, CCC crews graded a trail from Senter Point to Lake Desor, erected a ski-patrol cabin, and disposed of slashings along former lumber trails. The enrollees also built a small dock at Senter Point (near Camp Siskiwit), and helped with island wildlife management by constructing a moose corral and a range study area. At the close of the season in the fall, George Baggley of the National Park Service made a tour of Isle Royale, and recommended that certain improvements be undertaken to support the development of the park. These included "better transportation facilities, a base administrative and supply center on the mainland, better radio connections, more elaborate tourist facilities, and minimal interior trail and shelter construction." Baggley was familiar with the issues involved in

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Little, 86, citing Salmond, pp. 139-43.
Ibid., 86-87, citing McVey, Camp Inspection Report, NP-2, 31 May 1938; NP-1, 1 June 1938; NP-2, 16 August 1939; Reddock, Camp Inspection Report, NP-2, 23-24 August 1941; NP-3, 24 August 1941, R.G. 35, N.A.
Ibid., 87, citing Salmond, pp. 47-54, 162-8; McVey, Camp Inspection Report, NP-2, 31 May 1938; NP-1, 1 June 1938; NP-2, 16 August 1939; NP-3, 16 August 1940; Reddock, Camp Inspection Report, NP-2, 23-24 August 1941; NP-3, 24 August 1941, R.G. 35, N.A..
Ibid., 77, citing Shelvin, 1.
As Isle Royale National Park's first superintendent, Baggley played a key role in the future of the island.

At the commencement of the second season on Isle Royale, in June 1936, approximately 400 CCC enrollees were sent to Isle Royale. As a result of Baggley's recommendations, a second camp, CCC Camp Rock Harbor, was built at the Daisy Farm location in Rock Harbor, and a mainland supply base was built on the mainland at Houghton. Army officers directed activities at both Camp Siskiwit and at Camp Rock Harbor, while the National Park Service personnel supervised the field work. Progress was often slow due to the bureaucratic rivalry between National Park officials and military men, who quarreled over which projects took priority, and how to best operate camps.

Isle Royale CCC enrollees spent most of the hot, dry summer of 1936 fighting an immense forest fire that started in late July from the lumber piles left by the previous year's logging operations. Eighteen hundred men from the CCC, the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard worked for almost three months to control the blaze. (Some of the summer residents helped, although somewhat ineffectually). The fire was not

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35 Karamanski, et. al., 210.
brought under control until September 15 when rain and cooler weather came. However, by this time the fire had consumed 20 percent of Isle Royale's forests.39

After the fire was out, work was resumed on national park projects. The CCC enrollees normally did not spend winter on the island, but during the winter of 1936-1937, 115 CCC recruits volunteered to stay in order to clear remaining fire hazards. Baggley set the goals and activities: CCC crewmen were to clear fire damage, attend classes, capture moose to send to other parts of Michigan for study and stocking experiments, and repair camp structures. The recruits also built an ice skating rink, and enjoyed the mild winter.40 Over the winter, the National Park Service gained all responsibility for the winter camp and ran it like a lumber camp, rather than a military base. Boats brought in supplies including a team of horses, a herd of pigs, and chickens. The quality of the food improved, radio contact kept enrollees in touch with Houghton, and a CCC physician remained on the island to care for the winter crew members.41

The 1937-1940 seasons were highly productive for Isle Royale. In addition to other projects, a fire observation tower was built at Feldtmann Ridge, and the resorts on Belle Isle and Rock Harbor were improved, as was boat service to the island.42 In the spring of 1937 recruits constructed an ice house, warehouse, a temporary administration headquarters, and a utility dock at Caribou Island. Some of the men retrieved timbers from the lakeshore for future dock construction before severe weather set in.43 Park Service officials continued to search for a more suitable site for the National Park Service headquarters, however. In the beginning of the 1937 season, Superintendent Baggley decided to construct the National Park Service headquarters on Isle Royale at Mott Island, rather that expand the existing headquarters at Caribou Island.44 Mott Island was chosen for its situation near the main island. The island's harbor had water

39 Gale and Gale, 144.
40 Karamanski, et. al., 212, citing Entry 1 November, 19 December 1936; 1 January, 1, 12 February 1937, Camp Siskiwit; Robert Armstrong, Reminiscence of CCC and National Park Service Winter Enrollee, Carthage, Illinois (September 1984), Isle Royale National Park, Mott Island Archives.
41 Ibid., citing Civilian Conservation Corps, Log Entry 16, 19, 21 October and 15 November 1936; Camp Siskowit, Isle Royale, Michigan, Duluth Herald, 30 December 1936.
42 Ibid., citing Entry 30 October 1937, 17 July 1938, 14 May and 20 September 1939, 20 August 1940, Camp Siskowit Log; Duluth News Tribune, 2 December 1940.
43 Little, 79, citing Shelvin, 2.
44 Ibid., 83, 168.
sufficiently deep for heavy vessels, yet was protected from the severe Lake Superior storms.\textsuperscript{45}

CCC funds and workers supported the development of Mott Island, which continued into the fourth season in 1938. Improvements included a warehouse, officers' quarters, a water storage tank and sanitary facilities, new utilities and docking facilities for deep draft vessels, five boat campgrounds, shipping lanes markers, and buoys.\textsuperscript{46} A radio network was developed between Mott Island and Houghton, Michigan, improving communication with the mainland.\textsuperscript{48}

During the winter of 1939 the National Park Service determined that major improvements were needed on the visitor accommodations at the west end of the main island. The old

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 82, citing Baggley To Director, National Park Service, 27 August 1937; Baggley to Director, National Park Service, 28 August 1937, File 201, part 1, Folder 210 Administration, Box 1248, R.G. 79, N.A.; Baggley to Director, National Park Service, File 600-03, part 1, Box 1255, R.G. 79, N.A.; Baggley to Director, National Park Service, 4 September 1937, File 210, part 1, Folder 201 Administration, Box 1248, R.G. 79, N.A.

\textsuperscript{46} Little, 83, 168.


During the winter of 1939 the National Park Service determined that major improvements were needed on the visitor accommodations at the west end of the main island. The old

\textsuperscript{49} Little, 84.
Windigo site, where it was constructed by the Army. One of the four garages ordered was erected at Windigo (one garage was erected at Rock Harbor, and two were kept in Houghton). The camp was completed by the end of the 1939 season (November), except for some work on the bath house and water system. Camp Windigo was occupied in 1940 and 1941.50

Enrollees remodeled the Washington Club, which was afterwards known as the Windigo Inn.51 They also created a trail that connected Siskiwit Bay with Windigo, by utilizing the abandoned mining road that led up to Island Mine—one that had been in use by trappers and the fishermen from the Washington Harbor Club for years—and then added a connecting path to the old Wendigo Mine Road. The recruits also built a ski patrol cabin and a dock.

Isle Royale officially became a national park on April 3 1940, after the Secretary of the Interior had accepted the deeds to all lands on the island on behalf of the United States from the Isle Royale National Park Commission. At the end of the 1940 season Camp Siskiwit was disbanded, and in September 1941 the last CCC enrollees left the island when both Camp Rock Harbor and Camp Windigo closed.52

MISSION 66 PROGRAM: 1955-1966
Isle Royale National Park was officially dedicated in August 1946, 25 years after the concept of the park was proposed. The dedication delay had been caused by the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor, which was followed by a declaration of war on the United States by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy several days later. Between 1941 and 1945, World War II had directed the energy of most Americans toward achieving victory. The war years were slow for Isle Royale tourism, and yearly visitation declined by 50 percent during 1944, dropping to only 3751 visitors over the entire summer season.53

During the war years, many of the nation's parkland facilities had fallen into disrepair and were becoming outdated. Polls taken in the early 1950 found 69 percent of National Park visitors had complaints about deteriorated facilities.54 In 1955 National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth requested major financial

51 Ibid., citing Symon, “We Can Do It,” 85.
52 Karamanski, et. al., 213, citing Duluth News Tribune, 14 September 1941.
53 Ibid., citing Isle Royale Journal, 2 (January 1971).
allocations for the park system from President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Wirth, concerned with the deteriorating conditions of the nation’s parklands, called for a long term development program to be implemented to upgrade all national parks. This program was called “Mission 66.”

Mission 66 was a ten-year improvement goal that was to be completed in 1966, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service. Mission 66 improvements were founded in modern and functionalist design theory, which held the proper design of public facilities could influence behavior. Mission 66 park structures were, in theory, designed to both preserved natural resources, while meeting the recreational needs of park visitors. Mission 66 design was guided in part by some of the old guard National Park architects, such as Cecil Doty, who designed many of the “rustic” CCC-era buildings. The architecture was also strongly influenced by the new wave of National Park Service designers, who were interested in contemporary architectural trends and encouraged the introduction of modernist concepts. As part of this modernist doctrine, national park structure design was standardized across the nation, regardless of the native materials and historic setting of the individual sites.

Isle Royale was allocated over three million dollars for park improvements through the Mission 66 program. As part of this program, two 15-room lodge units and ten housekeeping cabins were built at Rock Harbor as part of the Rock Harbor Lodge complex. Other improvements involved increasing electrical generation capacity at the Mott Island, Washington Harbor, and Rock Harbor administrative and recreational facilities. Contemporary toilets were installed in visitor facilities. Existing trails were improved and swamps were corduroyed and bridged. Canoe portages were improved between the interior lakes, additional water-accessible campsites were developed, and screened lean-to camp shelters were constructed in the style of the New York State Adirondack shelters. Boat docks were repaired, and the 165-foot, 319-ton Ranger III was acquired.

The acquisition of the Ranger III was significant to the park, in that it provided the regular passenger service between Houghton and Isle Royale that was essential to park visitation. Mission 66 funds also encouraged other independent investment in Isle Royale transportation facilities, such as float-plane service from Houghton and ferry services based at Grand Portage.

56 Joan DeGraff, “Mount Rushmore National Memorial Concession Building,” Section 8, 5.
57 Ibid., Section 7.8, 5.
CHANGING WILDERNESS PARADIGMS

Visitation at Isle Royale National Park rose in 1961, and continued to rise, in large part due to the improvements in lake transportation and on-island accommodations. Coincidental to the increased visitation, however, was the advent of a growing national concern for environmental quality, and questions concerning the impact of recreational use of wilderness areas were being raised. The sport of backpacking was being made popular by a small group of outdoor enthusiasts who enjoyed hiking rugged trails, appreciated the isolation provided by the sport, and the beauty of unspoiled wilderness vistas that hiking on Isle Royale afforded. The publication of Sigurd Olson's *The Singing Wilderness* and *The Listening Point* served to increase the appreciation of north country wilderness activities.

The Mission 66 program's operational directives had been viewed with skepticism by wilderness advocates, and previously accepted concepts of wilderness preservation were being challenged. In 1956 the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, and novelist Wallace Stegner had helped lead the fight to preserve the wilderness at Dinosaur National Monument in Colorado. This victory incited additional battles that sought to prevent development in natural areas, battles which led Congress to pass the National Wilderness Preservation Act in 1964. These preservation concepts affected Isle Royale National Park. In a 1967 public hearing held in Houghton, Michigan, a proposal was made by the National Park Service that 119,618 acres of Isle Royale would be set aside as wilderness. Under these circumstances, "visitor facilities would be kept to a minimum, fire control measures would be used 'only where necessary,' machinery would be restricted to emergency situations, non-native plant species would be eliminated, and natural predation would become the only wildlife management tool on Isle Royale."*

Over the next ten years, debate continued over how much Isle Royale land should be designated wilderness. Finally, in June 1972 a new plan designated an additional 9000 acres of the

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island as wilderness—97 percent of Isle Royale National Park.\textsuperscript{63}

Since that time, additional acres have been added, and currently 99 percent of the park's land area is designated as wilderness.

\textsuperscript{63} Little, 220-3; Senate Sub-Committee on Public Lands, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, \textit{Preservation of Wilderness Areas}, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session Washington, D.C., 1972.
INTRODUCTION

There were two major architectural periods on Isle Royale relating to the theme of conservation and National Park Service Administration. The first occurred between 1935 and 1941 when the National Park Service employed Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) recruits in the implementation of improvements for the creation of the national park. Structures on Isle Royale from this period represent both the rustic-style, recreational park architecture that was typical of relief era design across the nation, and the transitory CCC workers' camps.

The second architectural period occurred as part of the National Park Service's "Mission 66" program. Mission 66 was part of the modern architectural movement that was occurring in the National Park Service during the 1950s. Superintendent Conrad Wirth spearheaded Mission 66 with the intention of creating a "renaissance" for the long-neglected national parklands and visitor facilities. Implemented between 1955 and 1966, Mission 66 resulted in major improvements in the form of recreational and administrative buildings, park service personnel housing, and other facility and landscape improvements. The Mission 66 improvements were made at the Mott Island Park Headquarters complex, the Windigo area at Washington Harbor, and the Rock Harbor Lodge complex, and affected the exterior appearance of the original CCC-era architecture at these sites.

Because Mission 66 architecture has not yet reached historic status, structures from this period were not included in the 1995 LCS survey. Discussion of Mission 66 buildings and alterations will be limited to those that relate to the integrity of the CCC-era structures. When the Mission 66 era buildings reach 50 years of age, they should be evaluated for their ability to convey associations with this important era in the evolution of the National Park Service, planning and Service-wide design guidelines.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CCC RUSTIC PARK ARCHITECTURE

The surviving CCC administrative structures at Isle Royale are representative of the rustic style which used natural materials and craftsmanship to form a sympathetic relationship between structures and their surroundings. CCC architecture and landscape architecture were standardized across the state and national park system, and guided in large part by a book published in 1935 by the Department of the Interior, authored by Albert Good. Soon expanded into three volumes, Good's publications became "pattern books" for emerging CCC park architecture, and set a design standard for CCC construction projects. The descriptive term for Good's architectural style was "rustic," which was defined as the utilization of native materials in proper scale, with no severely straight lines or over-sophistication of design. The style was further described as being evocative of
buildings constructed by "pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools, that thereby expressed sympathy with the natural surroundings and the past."^64

CCC structures that were part of a more formal design (usually those to be used or seen by the public) utilize native materials that harmonize with the surroundings, such as peeled log and roughly finished boards and stone. Basic design of the structures, as with most CCC era projects, relied on labor intensive rustic construction techniques for their character. The "honest" ornamentation resulting from the patterns and textures of patient preparation of materials, repeated hand tool marks, and workings of a limited palate of building materials was well suited to the largely young and inexperienced workforce of the CCC enrollees.

**BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLES OF CCC RUSTIC PARK ARCHITECTURE**

**ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, MOTT ISLAND**

**PERIODS: 1939 - 1940, AND 1956 - 1966**

The National Park Service Headquarters complex on Mott Island retains several buildings built by the CCC, including two warehouses, two residential buildings, a kitchen, laundry, photo lab, rope storage building, water tower and a water pumphouse. The CCC construction occurred on Mott Island between 1939 and 1940, but several of these buildings have been repaired and remodeled over the years, and additional buildings were added to the complex as part of Mission 66. As a result of these changes, some buildings express characteristics of one, or both of these architectural styles, and the complex as a unit retains only medium / low integrity when evaluated as CCC rustic architecture.

All the historic buildings in the complex are in good or fair condition, and retain varying degrees of integrity. The two warehouses were altered during the Mission 66 era and no longer retain qualities representational of the CCC era. The kitchen, laundry, and water tower also have low integrity of materials, design, and workmanship due to alterations made in the late 1940s and 1970s. Additionally, two of the twelve historic structures in the complex pre-date the CCC era: residences #13 and #3 were built ca. 1915 and 1918, respectively, may have both been "Sears," or other mail order designs. They were moved to Mott Island from the old Minong Lodge resort in Tobin Harbor, where they were originally used as guest cabins during the height of the Isle Royale resort era. Although these buildings are not representative of CCC-era construction, they may be

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important as examples of recycled buildings, a common practice among island fishermen, recreationalists, small resort owners, and the National Park Service.

Several structures retain high integrity of CCC-era design, materials, and workmanship. For example, the one-story, gabled residence #4 and the Superintendents' quarters (#6) both retain their original fieldstone foundations, stone chimneys, board and batten siding and shingled roofs, and continue to be used for their original purposes. The photo lab (#11) and the rope storage building (#116) both retain high integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, adding to the complex as examples of the simple utilitarian buildings of the era. At the other end of the complex, the pump house (#7) provides a particularly good example of the CCC's characteristic use of native materials and sensitivity to the surrounding landscape. This is exemplified in the use of stone cladding that makes building appear to "grow" out of rock on which it sits. It has high integrity in all areas but feeling and association, which is medium, due to the proximity of the park service personnel apartment building added during the Mission 66 program.

Two residence buildings, residence #4, and residence #6 (Superintendent's residence) were both built by the CCC in 1938-1939 and 1939-1940, respectively. They are the only two surviving Mott Island housing units built by the CCC on Mott Island, and are in good condition. Both retain high degrees of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship, although are rated as having only medium integrity of association and feeling due to the alterations to the rest of the complex.

Residence #4 was the first housing unit built at Mott, and is a simple, one-story, gabled structure with board and batten siding. It measures approximately 38' x 25', and has two porches: an offset, projecting gable with an incorporated porch, and a shed-roofed, screened porch. The building has a combination of windows: six-light windows in sets of two, three-over-threes, and two large picture windows flanking the fireplace. The basement has four-light windows. The design and use of local materials of residence #4 is typical of the CCC style, which intended to harmonize buildings with the landscape. CCC-era details include the basement door, which is constructed of vertical board and batten and hung with large, cast iron strap hinges; the stone foundation; and exterior stone chimney.

Residence #6, currently used as the Superintendent's quarters, was built in 1939-1940 by the CCC. The building is a one-story gabled structure with shallow eave overhang, and is sheathed in board and batten siding. The building measures approximately 67' x 37', has a rear screened porch, shingle roof, and a concrete
foundation. Windows were originally six-light, but are now single-light casements in sets of twos and threes. The interior stone chimney was formerly exterior. Additions include a dining room, bathroom, and bedroom, which were added in 1950-51.

The water pumphouse (#7) was built by the CCC in 1938-1939, is in good condition, and retains high integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship. The structure retains only medium integrity of association and feeling due to the proximity of the more modern park service apartment building (Mission 66 construction). The pumphouse is typical of the industrial-use designs of CCC era park buildings, which were intended to harmonize with the landscape. The rustic, utilitarian design compliments the use of the building and distinguishes it from the other administrative and residential structures in the complex.

Designed as an auxiliary building by CCC architect H. A. Kreinkamp, the pumphouse has been in continuous use since its construction. Built on a rock bluff overlooking Lake Superior, the pump house is a one-story, gabled building, measuring approximately 22' x 16'. It has rough stone masonry walls with logs horizontally laid in gable ends, and rubble coursing. Walls once had shutters on the windows (bolts still exist where hinges once hung). The structure rests on a stone foundation, has a shake shingle roof, log rafters, a concrete floor, unfinished interior walls, and double vertical board doors in the gable ends with oversize wrought-iron strap hinges. The walls are battened to appear as if they rise out of the natural stone, especially at the rear. The south side of the structure has six-light windows.

The photo lab (#11) was built by the CCC in 1939-1940. It is in good condition, has undergone no major additions or alterations, and retains high integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship. It has low integrity of setting, association, and feeling, however, due to its proximity to the much altered east and west warehouses. Originally used as a latrine, the photo lab is a simple one-story, one-room, gabled building, measuring approximately 21' x 10'. It is sided with vertical board and batten. The building's six-light windows and one of the original entries are presently covered.

The rope storage building (#116) was built in 1942, and has high integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship. Built to store rope for the marine railway, the structure is a one-story, gabled building, set on a block foundation. It is sheathed in droplap siding without cornerboards, and has rolled roofing. However, extensive additions within the immediate area seriously impact the building's setting, association, and feeling.
The west warehouse (#1—currently a fire tool cache), and the east warehouse (#2—currently the Park Headquarters Administration Building) were built by the CCC in 1939-1940. Although the two buildings retain their integrity of setting, and their massing has not been altered, both have suffered from loss of feeling, association, materials, and design, and are currently more representative of the Mission 66 style. The two warehouses were most important structures built during the development of the Mott Island Headquarters, and were used to store materials and supplies. The original construction was log, seven courses high, with board-and-batten in the gable ends. The two structures are almost identical in size, shape, and form: the west warehouse measures 119' x 35', and the east warehouse measures 120' x 35'.

The laundry building (#9) was built by the CCC in 1938, and is a typical utilitarian structure of the CCC era. Although it retains high integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and location, its integrity of setting, association, and feeling suffer due to alterations of neighboring buildings. The laundry is a one-room, one-story, gabled building. A discrepancy exists between measurements: it currently measures 10'6" x 18', but may have originally measured 10' x 14'. The laundry has lap siding, a concrete foundation, a five panel door, six-light hopper windows, and unfinished walls. The building originally had one shower in the officer's end, and three in the laborer's end.

Two structures originally built by the CCC that no longer retain high integrity are the kitchen building (#10), and the water tower (#7A). The kitchen building was built by the CCC in 1938, but was significantly altered in 1940 when it was expanded to twice its original size, and in 1976 it was partitioned into five units. Other alterations include a new foundation, plumbing, rewiring, new rafters, cedar shakes, and log veneer siding. The water tower was built by the CCC in 1938-1939 and retains its historic frame, but the original redwood 8,000-gallon tank was replaced in 1982 with a 16,000 gallon, non-wood tank. The water tower retains its original function, however, and is connected to the pump house.

**Significance**

As a unit, the National Park Headquarters complex on Mott Island does not retain high integrity as CCC-era rustic architecture. However, individual structures survive that provide good examples of the era, and represent the first permanent development by the National Park Service, that was made possible by Roosevelt's Public Works Administration.
Figure 5.6. Plan view of National Park Service Headquarters on Mott Island. Drawing from 1988 Comprehensive Design Plan.
West Warehouse (#1).

East Warehouse (#2).

Photo Lab (#11).
Residence (#3).

Residence (#3).

Residence (#3).

Residence (#6).
CONSERVATION AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Residence (#6).

Residence (#6).

Residence (#4).

Residence (#4).
CONSERVATION AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Water Pumphouse (#7).

Water Pumphouse (#7).

Water Tower (#7A).

RR Shed (#55).

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ROCK HARBOR LODGE, AT ROCK HARBOR
PERIOD: 1937 - 1940
One building survives at the Rock Harbor Lodge complex that is representative of the CCC-era rustic architecture. An auditorium, built between 1937 and 1940, as part of the updates and renovations made to the resort, survives in good condition. However, this building's integrity suffers in all areas but location due to exterior remodeling (the building is sided with log veneer), and alterations made to many of the resort buildings.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CCC CAMP ARCHITECTURE
There were three CCC camps at Isle Royale National Park—Camp Siskiwit (near Senter Point), Camp Rock Harbor (the current Daisy Farm location), and Camp Windigo at Washington Harbor. Except for the Windigo site, little remains of these camps, which were erected to serve as temporary bases for the CCC recruits. Only a root cellar remains from CCC era at Camp Rock Harbor—the second CCC camp initiated on the main island at the old Daisy Farm location—and it is in poor condition. Although the Daisy Farm location may be significant for its continuum of use—it was first used by the American Fur Company, then was the location of the Ransom townsite during the first copper boom on Isle Royale—it will not be featured in this discussion due to its lack of surviving CCC-era structures. Several CCC camp buildings were moved from Camp Rock Harbor to commercial fishery sites and summer resident's properties, and survive in their new locations. Comparatively, the structures at the Windigo site at Washington Harbor provide better evidence of the CCC camp presence.

Few CCC camps survive today. They were constructed as temporary establishments, intended to provide housing and domestic needs for workers. Camp buildings included residential structures (bunkhouse / dorms, and platform tents), kitchen / dining room, bathroom / shower facilities, laundry building, storage buildings, workshops, and other utility buildings. Buildings were designed to be quickly erected and easily removed. (The army, or sponsoring state or local agency would dismantle the camps after they closed.) Designed as temporary structures for the duration of a project, most have not survived the more than fifty year period since the program began.66

Typical CCC camp structures were simple frame buildings that were standardized and made of pre-fabricated stock parts. The buildings are all one-story, low-pitched gabled structures, with overhanging eaves and entries in the gable end. The size of several structures was dependent upon number of sections assembled: each section had a standard 4' span (estimated) and a six- or nine-light window, with shiplap siding. Vertical joints were

66 Ahlgren, 3.
covered with a vertical board. The most common roofing material was roll or shingle asphalt.

**BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLES OF CCC CAMPS ON ISLE ROYALE**

**WINDIGO, AT WASHINGTON HARBOR**

**PERIOD: 1940-1941**

The Windigo site has low integrity as a CCC camp due to the alterations, additions, and changes in building locations made over the years. However, the property retains a few structures from the CCC camp, which was built between 1940-1941 as part of the implementation of the new Isle Royale National Park.

Surviving CCC camp buildings include two employee housing units (employee housing structure #392 was built in 1957 using the CCC pre-fabricated sections), a trail crew bunk house, laundry building, and a foundation. A carpenter's shop (#580), constructed by the Park Service in 1969 using salvaged CCC panels, also remains. Of the five remaining historic structures, the trail crew bunk house retains the highest integrity.

Structures on the site not related to the CCC camp include the Windigo pump house (#91, built ca. 1930), the dining room / kitchen (#93, built in 1932 and altered during the 1950s or 60s), a ranger station (#95, built between 1948-49 and significantly altered in the 1970s), a root cellar (#322, pre-1938 construction), two camping shelters (#95A), three tent frames (#95B) built in 1982 by the National Park Service, and a shed (#95E). Further research of this site may reveal new importance these structures. (The site was previously developed as part of the Wendigo Mining Company, and later, the Washington Club.) Additionally, like the National Park Service Headquarters complex on Mott Island and the Rock Harbor Lodge complex, Mission 66 architecture at Windigo was not included in the 1995 LCS survey and should be evaluated when structures reach 50 years of age.

The trail crew bunk house (#125) is in good condition and has high integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship. Its integrity of setting, association, and feeling are medium to low due to the lack of remaining associated buildings. It is a gabled frame building constructed with droplap-sided sectional panels. Windows are original nine-lights. The building has no foundation and rests on concrete footers.

The concrete foundation (#95C) has low degrees of integrity in all areas but location, and is in poor condition. It is located down a slope, southwest of the tent frames. The foundation measures approximately 55' x 11', is built in three sections, and is believed to have been that of a bath house. Surviving artifacts include the rusted remains of a metal stove and a boiler.
SIGNIFICANCE
The trail crew bunk house (#125) is important as a representative of typical CCC camp architecture constructed during the early development of Isle Royale National Park.
Figure 5.7. Plan view of Windigo. Drawing by Dena Sanford, 1995.
CONSERVATION AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Laundry (#94).

Shed (#95D).

Root Cellar (#322).

Cabins in Windigo complex.
NPC Dining Room and Kitchen (#93).

NPC Dining Room and Kitchen, rear (#93).

NPC Dining Room and Kitchen, rear (#93).

NPC Dining Room and Kitchen, rear (#93).

Tent Frames (#95B).
Employee Housing, front (#392).

Employee Housing, rear (#392).

Residence (#123).

Residence (#123).
CONSERVATION AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Trail Crew Bunkhouse (#125).

Carpenter's Shop (#580).

Trail Crew Bunkhouse, interior (#125).

Carpenter's Shop, interior (#580).
Pump House (#91).

Ranger Station (#95).

Foundation (#95C).

Adirondack Shelter.
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<td>-</td>
<td>Blacksmith Shop Ruins</td>
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High integrity; eligible as a complex.
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<td>A &amp; C</td>
<td>Early 20th C. Resort (large-scale)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Lodge Guest House</td>
<td>1922 - 1924</td>
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<td>41A</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>Spruces Cabin</td>
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<td>40C</td>
<td>America Dock</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Dining Room and Kitchen</td>
<td>1908, 1918, 1941,1946</td>
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<td>Medium integrity; extensive infill between 1956-1963 makes this group ineligible as a complex. Individual buildings are eligible under &quot;C&quot;.</td>
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<td>359</td>
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<td>Early 20th C. Resort (large-scale)</td>
<td>331</td>
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<td>Chippewa Harbor</td>
<td>Holger Johnson's Resort and Trading Post</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Commercial Fishing / Early 20th C. Resort (small-scale)</td>
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<td>Johnson Cabin</td>
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<td>171</td>
<td>Rock Harbor Ranger Station</td>
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<td>287</td>
<td>Stack House</td>
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<td>288</td>
<td>Guest House</td>
<td>1900 - 1920</td>
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<td>Stone Retaining Wall</td>
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<td>Snell Camp</td>
<td>A Recreation</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>Snell Cottage</td>
<td>1905, 1938-1940, 1944</td>
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<td>Siefert Camp</td>
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<td>298</td>
<td>Snell Guest House</td>
<td>1915-1920, 1950</td>
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<td>297</td>
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<td>Siefert Cottage</td>
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<td>291</td>
<td>Siefert Cottage</td>
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<td>289</td>
<td>Connolly Cottage</td>
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<td>272</td>
<td>Kemmer Seasonal Residence</td>
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<td>Edwards Dining Room</td>
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<td>Edwards Privy</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>G H M H H H H H H</td>
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<td>Gale Camp (Island #13)</td>
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<td>276</td>
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<td>1937</td>
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<td>Tool Shed / Wash House</td>
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<td>&quot;The Parsonage&quot; Guest Cottage</td>
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<td>&quot;Deer House&quot; Guest Cottage</td>
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<td>How Cabin</td>
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<td>Savage Boat House</td>
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<td>Barnum's Large Boat House</td>
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<td>Dunwoodie Cottage</td>
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<td>Smoke House</td>
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<td>John's Hotel</td>
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<td>Double Privy</td>
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<td>John's Log Cabin</td>
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**Chart-15**
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<td>Recreation / (Commercial Fishery from 1958 - 1986)</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>McGath Residence</td>
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<td>Smoke House</td>
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<td>570</td>
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<td>568</td>
<td>Boat House Ruin</td>
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<td>571</td>
<td>Generator House</td>
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<td>F/P</td>
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High integrity as a recreational compound; eligible as a complex.
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<td>McPherren Compound</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>McPherren Cottage</td>
<td>1935 - 1936</td>
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<td>Sleeping Cabin I</td>
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<td>McPherren Boat House and Winch</td>
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<td>Bath House</td>
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<td>303C</td>
<td>Docks (Crib)</td>
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<td>303D</td>
<td>Woodshed</td>
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High integrity; eligible as a complex.
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<td>National Park Service Headquarters</td>
<td>A &amp; C</td>
<td>Conservation / NPS Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>West Warehouse (Fire Tool Cache)</td>
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<td>East Warehouse (Park Hdqtrs)</td>
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<td>Residence #6 (Superintendent's Residence)</td>
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<td>Residence #13</td>
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<td>7A</td>
<td>Water Tower (historic frame, new water tank)</td>
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<td>Pumphouse</td>
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<td>Laundry Bldg #9</td>
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<td>Kitchen Bldg. #10</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Photo Lab</td>
<td>1939 (CCC)</td>
<td>C G H L H H H L L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>116</td>
<td>Rope Storage Bldg. #116</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>C G H L H H H L L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
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Chart-18
<table>
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<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>PROPERTY NAME</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE #</th>
<th>STRUCTURE NAME</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTION HISTORY</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTION</th>
<th>INTEGRITY</th>
<th>STRUCTURE ELIGIBILITY</th>
<th>PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY AND COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windigo</td>
<td>Windigo</td>
<td>A &amp; C</td>
<td>Conservation / NPS Administration</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>Windigo Pump House</td>
<td>c. 1930 (moved from Tookers Is. 1940)</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>NPC Dining Room &amp; Kitchen (<em>Store</em>)</td>
<td>1932 (Washington Club) 1958, 1968, 1983</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>322</td>
<td>Root Cellar</td>
<td>pre-1938 construction</td>
<td>C G H H H H H H M</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>94</td>
<td>Laundry Bldg.</td>
<td>1942, 1973 (salvaged parts from Singer's Resort)</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>123</td>
<td>Employee Housing</td>
<td>1939 - 40 (int. remodeled)</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
<td>Eligible</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>392</td>
<td>Employee Housing</td>
<td>built in 1957 using CCC frame sections</td>
<td>C G M M H H H L M</td>
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<td>95A</td>
<td>Shelters (2)</td>
<td>1950s</td>
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<td>95B</td>
<td>Tent Frames (3)</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
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<td>580</td>
<td>Carpenter's Shop</td>
<td>1969 (salvaged CCC buildings)</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
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<td>95C</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>1939 - 40</td>
<td>C P H L L L L L L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
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<td>95E</td>
<td>Shed</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
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<td>95</td>
<td>Ranger Station (will be removed in 1998)</td>
<td>1948 - 1949, 1978</td>
<td>N / C</td>
<td>L S D M W A F</td>
<td>M / L</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low integrity; ineligible as a complex. Buildings #123 and #125 are individually eligible under "C" for design.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>PROPERTY NAME</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE #</th>
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<th>INTEGRITY</th>
<th>STRUCTURE ELIGIBILITY</th>
<th>PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY AND COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daisy Farm</td>
<td>Daisy Farm</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Conservation (CCC Camp)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Root Celler</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>HLLLMMML</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
<td>Low integrity; ineligible</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Chart-20