

Town Crier

HISTORICAL SOCIETY of GREATER LANSING

P. O. Box 515, Lansing, Michigan

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GHOST TOWN TO BE RESTORED

One of the latest additions to the Michigan State Parks system is Fayette located on Snail Shell Harbor on Big Bay de Noc, Delta County in the Upper Peninsula. Surrounded by high limestone cliffs on three sides, the still, deep green water providing safe anchorage, it is one of the most scenic attractions of the Midwest.

The scene of one of Michigan's pioneer industries, the smelting of iron in charcoal fired furnaces, the ruins of these mid-19th Century works remain to give the place unusual historic interest and pictorial appeal.

Purchased by the State in 1959 the park was put under the management of Donald Ike who resides there with his family in one of the "salt box" houses which was restored and modernized.

The Conservation Department's long-range plans include restoration of some of the buildings, proper identification of all buildings and establishing a museum showing the way of living at Fayette during the "big years" of 1864-84 and the early history of the iron industry.

Mrs. Ike, wife of the park manager, has been hired to work with the people of the area to obtain information needed in the restoration. Old photographs, record books, artifacts, correspondence and other material of historical significance relating to Fayette and histories of the families who lived there are being sought. Write or personally contact Donald Ike, Fayette State Park Manager at Fayette, Michigan.

The Jackson Iron Company was founded at Jackson, Michigan in 1845 and one of their projects was to establish iron smelting operations in Michigan's northern wilderness to save transportation costs of raw materials.

When the surveyors for the Jackson Iron Co. came on the area in the Garden Peninsula in 1860 they found the only inhabitants--Menominee Indians--quietly farming a clearing here and there in the dense hardwood forests.

The surveyors immediately saw the opportunity to develop an iron smelter on the site--all necessary ingredients were at hand--iron ore was in

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The Historical Society of Greater Lansing will hold its April 19 meeting at the Civic Center in Lansing, Parlor S, Wednesday evening at 8:00 o'clock.

Roy W. Adams, Justice of the Peace at Mason will talk to the members on the History of Mason.

Adams is a descendant of Mason pioneers and from 1910 to 1918 his Pioneer Stories were carried in the Detroit Free Press, Grand Rapids Herald and the Lansing and Jackson papers.

In 1950 he published a fictional story of pioneer life in Ingham County "Peg Leg".

His interest in pioneer history was inherited from his mother, Frances Litelia Sturtevant Adams who was a historian and author of "Pioneer History of Ingham County" and engaged in genealogical research.

The final and annual meeting of the Society for the 1960-61 season will be held May 10. Details will be announced in the next TOWN CRIER.

CIVIL WAR BATTLES TO BE PLOTTED

Dr. Roland Baker, Director of Michigan State University Museum announces a five-year project at the Museum. A huge map of the United States has been prepared by the museum staff and the Centennial observance of the battles fought during the entire Civil War period are to be plotted on the map, as they occurred a hundred years ago.

The public is invited to see this and the many other fine exhibits--many pertaining to the early days of Michigan. The Museum is open daily from 8-5 and on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from 1-5. Free.

HARTWICK PINES REHABILITATION PLANS

Solan Weeks, curator, Michigan Historical Commission Museum, Lansing, along with National Parks Service, is working on plans for the rehabilitation of the museum at Hartwick Pines State Park. Presented to the State of Michigan in 1927 by Mrs. Karen B. Hartwick, as a living memorial to her husband, Major Edward E. Hartwick, who lost his life in World War I. Other thoughts inspired the gift--to perpetuate the story of pine lumbering and to preserve the beauty of the forest.

stock piles 35 miles across the bay at Escanaba; limestone, the flux for the ore, underfoot; hardwood to make the charcoal heat surrounded them, and the deep natural harbor provided transportation by boat to move the pig iron east. Also the remote region was less likely to become involved in the impending war.

In 1864, the Company purchased 26,000 acres of land in the area and Fayette Brown, a company official and inventor of the Fayette furnace, was sent to the Upper Peninsula to establish the industry.

Brown built a complete town, named it after himself and established a thriving industry. Approximately 50 log cabins were built along the lake shore. Ten two-story "salt box" homes of board and batten construction faced the harbor and the superintendent's home was built on the tip of the peninsula.

A hotel, blacksmith shop, company store, opera house or community building and a bank were built at this early time.

The hub of the entire village was the smelter--two huge stone and brick structures that turned out a total of 229,288 tons of pig iron in the 20 years.

The downfall of the industry resulted primarily from the development of the open hearth furnace, but depletion of the readily accessible hardwood also hastened the end. The furnaces consumed 150 cords daily--equal to a pile of wood three city blocks long, four feet wide and four feet high. The hard maple was cut throughout the Garden Peninsula and hauled by horsedrawn wagons to the bluff at Fayette.

FORT MICHILIMACKINAC

Dr. Moreau S. Maxwell, Curator of the Museum at Michigan State University who has been in charge of the archaeological work in the restoration of Fort Michilimackinac announces that the report of the first summer's work (1959) is almost ready for publication.

Maxwell pointed out at the March meeting of our Society that Michigan has the most informative and startling history of any State in the Union and the need for the preservation of Michigan's great heritage.

His report on the fact that the project at the Fort had proven itself commercially successful and sound is encouraging. It is hoped other historical restoration projects in the state can be accomplished in this manner.

ANNOUNCING THE SASSAFRAS SPECIAL--a two day excursion trip into southern Ohio

GOING SATURDAY, MAY 27, 1961 from DT & I Delray Station (200 car parking lot) West End Avenue at Melville, Detroit, Mich. RETURNING Sunday, May 28, 1961 from Ironton, Ohio, foot of Railroad St. FEATURING an entire afternoon on the scenic and SENSATIONAL D T & I "SOUTH END". An all-day connecting fan trip on the 100% steam Buffalo Creek and Gauley RR. Stops made at points of interest and for photos.

Round trip fare for the DT & I trip is \$27.50 in reserved-seat coaches. In Pullmans fare is \$40 with an upper berth, or \$50 for a lower berth. Optional side trip from Ironton to the Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad (including excursion on the BC & G) is \$15. Reservations and ticket sales are being handled by the DT & I Trip Committee, Box 131, Carleton, Michigan.

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