

**HISTORY OF CHEBOYGAN AND
MACKINAC COUNTIES. BUSINESS
AND MANUFACTURING
STATISTICS, SOIL, TIMBER,
PROSPECTS FOR SETTLERS, &C.**

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History of Cheboygan and Mackinac Counties. Business and Manufacturing Statistics, Soil, Timber, Prospects for Settlers, &c. by George Robinson

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HISTORY

—OF—

Cheboygan and Mackinac

COUNTIES.

BUSINESS AND MANUFACTURING STATISTICS,

SOIL, TIMBER, PROSPECTS FOR SETTLERS, &C.

A Tourist's Guide for MACKINAW ISLAND and Other Places
of interest to Pleasure Seekers.

PRICE, - - - 75 CENTS.

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PREFACE.

In compiling a history of "Cheboygan and Mackinac Counties," we have been obliged to refer to a work entitled "Old and New Mackinaw," published by Rev. J. A. Van Fleet, to which we are indebted for much valuable information.

Our articles on general improvements, soil, timber, prospects for settlers, etc., will be very interesting to those who contemplate locating in this section.

We have also prepared a map of Mackinac Island which will be valuable to all visiting the place, and to those interested in the proposed "National Park." The map is full and complete, showing the various points of interest, and will assist the reader in locating the places so prominent in their early history.

We are indebted to our many patrons for the support they have given us, many of whom have displayed their business cards in our work, to which the attention of the public is respectfully invited.

THE PUBLISHERS.

EARLY HISTORY.

On our first pages will be found more of a general history of the Northwest, and of the prominent characters who figured most conspicuously in the early days of our country than a history of Cheboygan and Mackinac Counties alone. The first pale-faces who ventured into the region stretching around the great lakes, were Jesuit missionaries. Of these, the first who claim a notice here are the Fathers Charles Raymbault and Isaac Jogues. In 1641, these two men visited the Chippewas at the Sault and established a mission among them, but Raymbault soon after fell a victim to consumption, and the enterprise was abandoned. Desperate Indian wars, which soon followed, prevented any further attempt to establish missions among the Indians around the lakes for nearly thirty years.

In the spring of 1668, the illustrious Father, James Marquette, was ordered to repair to the Ottawa mission, as that around Lake Superior was then called. Arriving at the Sault, he planted his cabin at the foot of the rapids, on the American side, and began his work. In the following year he was joined by Father Dablou, Superior of the Mission, and by their united exertions a church was soon built. This was the first permanent settlement made on the soil of Michigan.

During the same year, Marquette repaired to Lapointe, near the western extremity of Lake Superior, leaving Dablou to continue the mission at the Sault. When he arrived at his new field of labor, he found several Indian villages, one of which was composed of Hurons, who, several years before, had dwelt, for a short time, on Mackinac Island.

In 1670, Marquette came to Michilimackinac, and in the following year he established a mission and built a chapel of logs on Point Iroquois, on the north side of the Straits.

This primitive temple was as simple as the faith taught by the devoted missionary, and had nothing to impress the senses, nothing to win by a dazzling exterior the wayward children of the forest. The new mission was called St. Ignatius, in honor of the founder of the Jesuit order, and to this day the name is perpetuated in the point upon which the mission stood.

During the summer of 1671, an event occurred of no common interest and importance in the annals of French history in America, but which, after all, was not destined to exert any lasting influence. Mutual interest had long conspired to unite the Algonquins of the west and the French in confirmed friendship. The Algonquins desired commerce and protection; the French, while they coveted the rich furs which these tribes brought them, coveted also an extension of political power to the utmost limits of the western wilderness. Hence Nicholas Perrot had been commissioned as the agent of the French government, to call a general Congress of the lake tribes at the Falls of St. Mary. The invitations of this enthusiastic agent of the Bourbon dynasty reached the tribes of Lake Superior, and were carried even to the wandering hordes of the remotest north. Nor were the nations of the south neglected. Obtaining an escort of Potawatomies at Green Bay, Perrot, the first of Europeans to visit that place, repaired to the Miamis at Chicago, on the same mission of friendship.

In May, the day appointed for the unwonted spectacle of the Congress of Nations, arrived. St. Lussou was the French official, and Allouez his interpreter. From the head waters of the St. Lawrence, from the Mississippi, from the Great Lakes, and even from the Red River, envoys of the wild republicans of the wilderness were present. And brilliantly clad officers from the veteran armies of France, with here and there a Jesuit missionary, completed the vast assembly. A cross was set up, a cedar post

marked with the French lilies, and the representatives of the wilderness tribes were informed that they were under the protection of the French king. Thus, in the presence of the ancient races of America, were the authority and the faith of France uplifted in the very heart of our Continent. But the Congress proved only an echo soon to die away, and left no abiding monument to mark its glory.

On the 17th of May, 1673, Marquette set out on his new labors in the west, which he completed in the spring of 1675 (having spent the preceding winter in Chicago,) set out on his return along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, and as he coasted along the eastern shore of the lake, his strength gradually failed, and he was at last so weak that he could no longer help himself, but had to be lifted in and out of his canoe when they landed each night. At last, perceiving the mouth of a river, he pointed to an eminence near by, and told his companions that it was the place of his last repose. They wished, however, to pass on, as the weather was fine and the day not far advanced, but a wind soon arose which compelled them to return and enter the river pointed out by the dying missionary. They carried him ashore, erected a little bark cabin, kindled a fire, and made him as comfortable as they could. Having heard the confessions of his companions, and encouraged them to rely with confidence on the protection of God, Marquette now sent them away, to take the repose they so much needed.

Two or three hours afterward he felt his end approaching, and summoned his companions to his side. Taking his crucifix from around his neck, and placing it in their hands, he pronounced in a firm voice, his profession of faith, and thanked the Almighty for the favor of permitting him to die a Jesuit, a missionary, and alone. Then, his face all radiant with joy, and his eyes raised, as if in ecstasy, above his crucifix, with the words "Jesus" and "Mary" upon his lips, he passed from the scene of his labors to his rest in heaven. After the first outbursts of grief were over, his companions arranged his body for burial, and, to the sound of

his little chapel bell, bore it slowly to the spot which himself had designated, where they committed it to the earth, raising a large cross to mark his last resting place. This occurred on the 18th day of May, 1675, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

Two years later, and almost on the anniversary of this event, a party of Indians whom Marquette had himself instructed at Lapointe, visited his grave, on their return from their winter hunting grounds, and resolved to disinter their good Father and bear his revered bones to the mission of St. Ignatius, at Mackinac, where they resided. They therefore opened the grave, and, according to custom, dissected the body, washing the bones and drying them in the sun. When this was done, a neat box of birch bark was prepared, into which the bones were placed, and the flotilla, now become a funeral convoy, proceeded on its way. Only the dip of the paddles and the sighs of the Indians broke the silence, as the funeral cortege advanced. When nearing Mackinac, the missionaries, accompanied by many of the Indians of the place, went to meet them, and there, upon the waters, rose the "De Profundis," which continued till the confined remains of the good Father reached the land. With the usual ceremonies, his bones were then borne to the church, where, beneath a pall stretched as if over a coffin, they remained during the day, when they were deposited in a little vault in the middle of the church, "where," says the chronicler, "he still reposes as the guardian angel of our Ottawa mission." Thus did Marquette accomplish, in death, the voyage which life had not enabled him to terminate.

In the life of this humble and unpretending missionary and explorer there is much to admire. Though an heir to wealth and position in his native land, he voluntarily separated himself from his friends, and chose a life of sacrifice, toil, and death, that he might ameliorate the moral and spiritual condition of nations sunk in paganism and vice. His disposition was cheerful under all circumstances. His rare qualities of mind and heart secured for him the esteem of all who knew him. He was a man of sound sense and close observation, not disposed to exaggerate, not egotis-

tical. His motives were pure and his efforts earnest. His intellectual abilities must have been of no ordinary type; his letters show him to have been a man of education, and though but nine years a missionary among the Indians, he spoke six languages with ease, and understood less perfectly many others.

"He died young, but there are silvered heads,
Whose race of duty is less nobly run."

France and England being rivals in the Old World, could not be partners of the New. Had these two powers been satisfied to divide the American continent amicably between them, the history of Columbia would have been far different from what it is now. But when they crossed the Atlantic, they brought with them their hereditary enmity, and this enmity was strengthened by new issues which were constantly arising. Each desired undivided dominion over the North and West, and at times the struggle for supremacy was desperate.

The Indians around the lakes were, almost without exception, friendly to the French, while the "Five Nations," dwelling south and east from Lake Ontario, sided with the English.

As early as 1686, English adventurers, in quest of the rich furs of the Northwest, pushed up the lakes to Mackinac, but the French, unwilling that any portion of the Indian trade should pass into the hands of their enemies, made their visits to this region too hazardous to be oft repeated.

The heart sickens in contemplating this portion of our country's history. Many a spot was stained with the blood of its unfortunate inhabitants. The forests were often lighted up with the conflagration of burning villages, and the stillness of the midnight hour was frequently broken by the shrill warwhoop, mingled with the shrieks of helpless women under the tomahawk or scalping-knife. And these tragic scenes were too often prompted by French or English thirst for power.

But finally, after many years, during which, with only short intervals of peace, these scenes of blood had frequent repetitions,