

**EARLY MACKINAC. A
SKETCH, HISTORICAL
AND DESCRIPTIVE**

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Early Mackinac. A sketch, historical and descriptive by Meade C. Williams

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MEADE C. WILLIAMS

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EARLY MACKINAC

I know an isle, an emerald set in pearl,
Mounting the chain of topaz, amethyst,
That forms the circle of our summer seas —
The fairest that our western sun hath kissed.

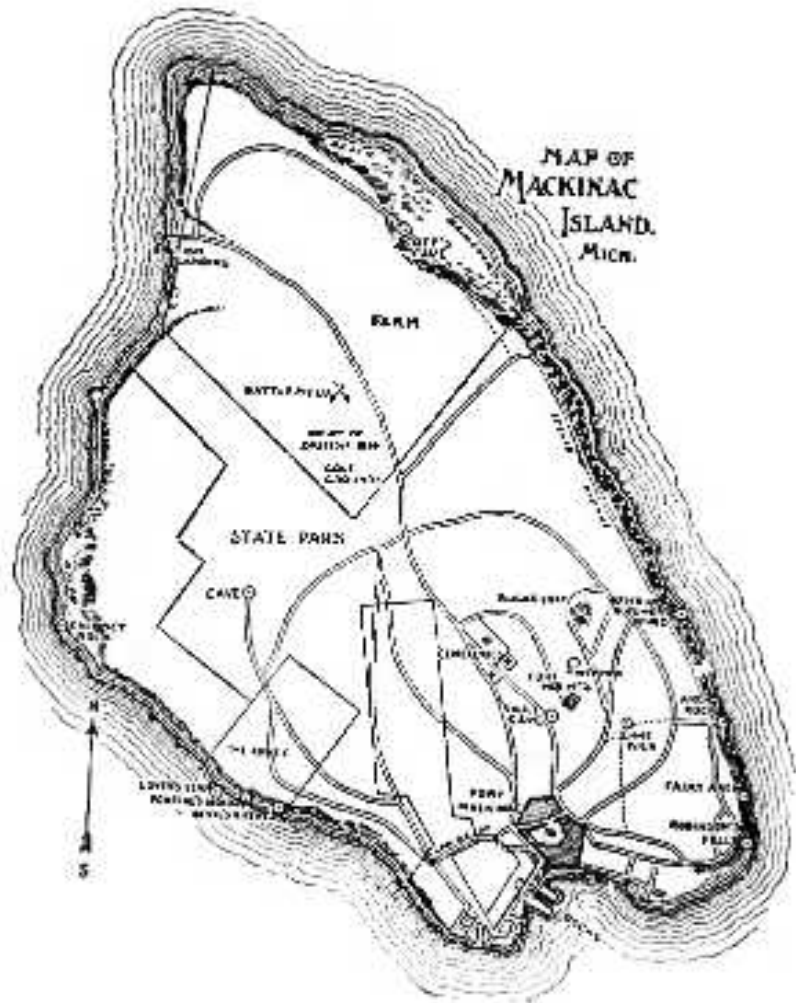
For all things lovely lend her loveliness;
The waves reach forth white fingers to caress,
The four winds, murmuringly meet to woo
And cloudless skies bend in blue tenderness.

The classic nymphs still haunt her grassy pools:
Her woods, in green, the Norseland elves have draped,
And fairies, from all lands, or far or near,
Her airy cliffs, and curving shores, have shaped.

Of old, strange suitors came in quest of her,
Some in the pride of conquest, some for pelf;
Priests in their piety, red men for revenge —
All seek her now, alone, for her fair self.

Rev. David H. Riddle.

MAP OF
MACKINAC
ISLAND,
MICH.



EARLY MACKINAC

A SKETCH
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE

BY
MEADE C. WILLIAMS

NEW EDITION
REVISED AND ENLARGED



NEW YORK
DUFFIELD & COMPANY
1919

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TO ALL THOSE
WHO HAVING ONCE KNOWN
THE ISLAND OF THE STRAITS

STILL REMEMBER ITS CHARM,
AND REMAIN UNDER THE POWER OF ITS SPELL,
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

This book was first issued in 1897. My thirteen summers at Mackinac Island up to that date have since increased to sixteen. I have felt moved from my acquaintance with the Island and my interest in it, to furnish in written form some of its history.

The book now enters its third edition. It is very considerably enlarged over the first and second issues.

While it is believed this portrayal in its historical portion may have interest for the general reader, it at the same time carries a local coloring which may more particularly appeal to those who know the place and who visit its shores. As the charm of the locality is due, in no small degree, to the halo of antiquity which hangs over it, I have felt warranted in giving special (though not exclusive) attention to *early* Mackinac.

The work embodies the result of no little research and investigation. As the reader will perceive, I am much indebted to the various writings of Henry R. Schoolcraft who dwelt for twenty years in the upper lakes region, and for eight years of this time was a resident of the Island. I also express my obligations to the valuable series of "Collections and Researches," a work carried on by the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society. These collections at present number twenty-eight volumes. The use they make of the important "Haldimand Papers," of Canada, bring to hand much of the early military history of the Straits and of the Island fort.

St. Louis, Mo.
June, 1904.

Mackinac Island.

PREFACE TO PRESENT EDITION

This book by my father came from an affectionate interest in the place where he spent many of the happiest summers of his life, and where, while planning another and larger book about this historically romantic region, he died in the summer of 1906.

Even those on the cool deck of the passing steamer, who merely look at the quaint 18th century fort exquisitely placed upon the hill overlooking the crescent harbor, must feel the charm of this vividly green island with the pure white beach sharply cutting the brilliantly blue waters of the Straits of Mackinac.

But my father's feeling went deeper than aesthetics. His devotion was more like the love of place shown in the sentiment for ancestral landmarks. He began his annual sojournings many years ago, before the days of garish hotels and cheap excursions. With occasional interruptions for travel he remained faithful, even after the island was pronounced "spoiled" by many of his friends among the original summer colony. So he knew the old inhabitants, all of them. He was a friend — a generous friend, we learned afterwards — to the fast disappearing Indians and the half-breeds who carried in their veins the blood of some of the oldest families of France, as was betrayed by their names. From them he picked up Indian tales, gathered local traditions of the French, Indian and English wars, and collected