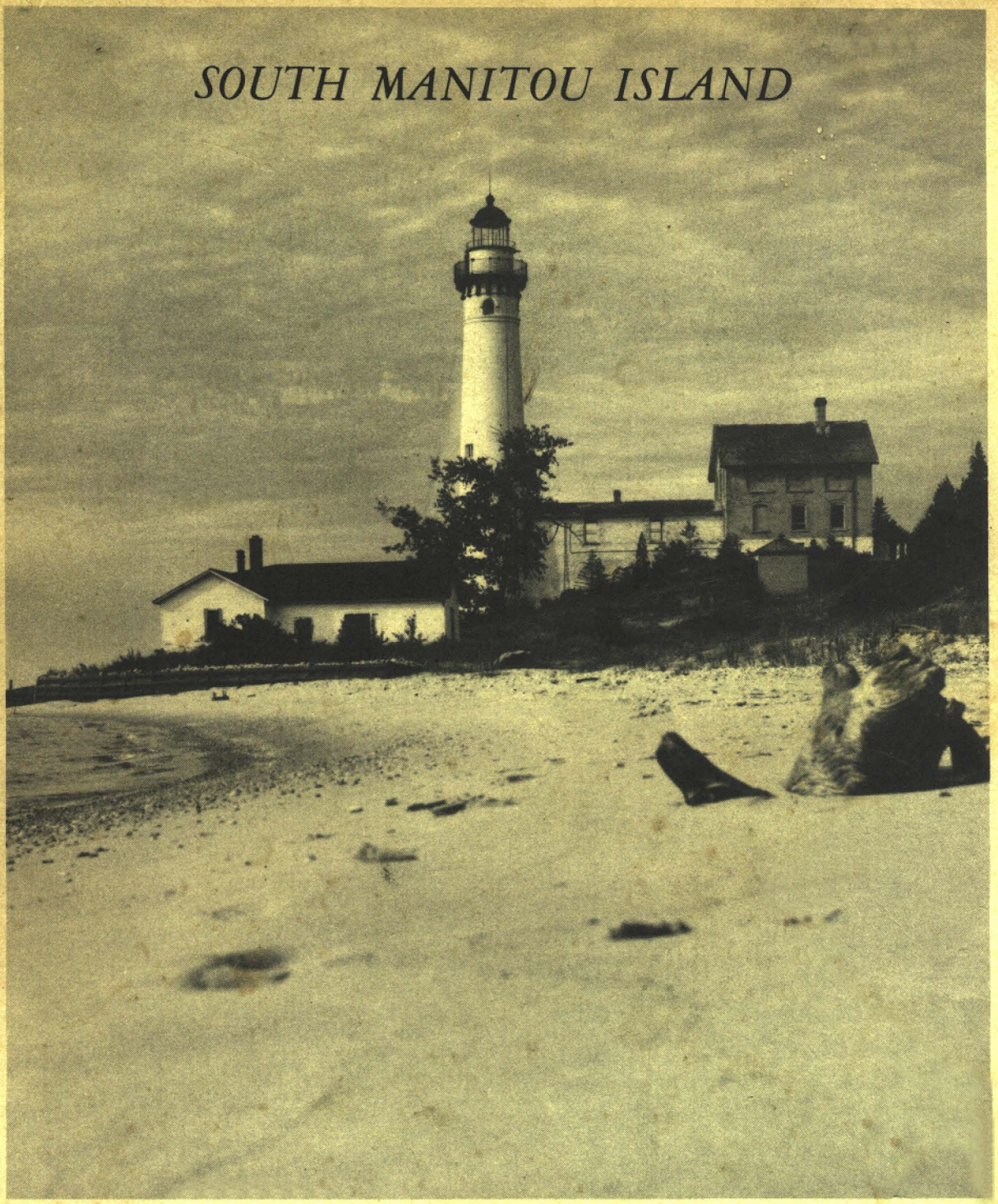
SOUTH MANITOU ISLAND



FROM PIONEER COMMUNITY TO NATIONAL PARK

SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE

MYRON H. VENT

SOUTH MANITOU ISLAND

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From Pioneer Settlement to National Park

By Myron H. Vent

Illustrated with photographs

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TO MY MOTHER

Commemorating

South Manitou Township

March 28, 1873

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Any work that has required extensive research should make acknowledgements to those who helped along the way. This work is no exception. I could not have written what follows had it not been for those who suggested where I might find information or how I might gain access to it. Without their help and time-consuming efforts, I could not have brought this book to completion.

First, assistance from the National Archives is gratefully acknowledged. The records which this institution has preserved and the helpfulness of its staff were of inestimable value. Dr. Hope K. Holdcamper was especially helpful in locating documents connected with the early history of South Manitou Lighthouse. The Department of Transportation provided similar assistance. Mr. Truman Strobridge of the Public Information Division, Headquarters U.S. Coast Guard, enabled me to gain access to the records of the Life Saving/Coast Guard Station.

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First among those who inspired and encouraged me is my brother William. Like me, he grew up on stories about the island. Not infrequently his letters contained clippings from papers recording events, either present-day or historical, about Leelanau County. He read the first version with enthusiasm and urged me to complete it.

Other assistance and encouragement came from Mr. Donald E. Roy, Mr. Fred W. Burdick, Mrs. Lottie Tobin, Mrs. Archie W. Roy, Mrs. Walter G. Mattocks, Mrs. Fay Raidiger, Mr. Peter LaValley, and Mr. Gerald E. Crowner. To Mr. Crowner, a former member of the Coast Guard Station on South Manitou, goes special thanks for his photographs and for his permission to reprint selections from his publication *I Remember These.* A word of appreciation to my son Henning for assistance in typing the manuscript and to my daughter Olivia for her editorial review. To my wife I tender gratitude for her consideration and forebearance.

Foreword and Dedication

As the title of this book indicates, it sketches in broad outlines the history of South Manitou Island. The story of South Manitou could, of course, be made much more entertaining. It could be the basis for a novel. At that point, however, it would cease to be history.

Unfortunately, even as a history, what I have written is incomplete. Much of what might have been recorded that is of human interest has been lost. Descriptions of the social life that once existed on the Island are missing. The barn dances that lasted until morning, the sleighing parties that included harrowing trips over the ice from the island to the mainland, deaths for lack of a doctor, the beautiful snowfalls that blanketed house and barn, cedar and hemlock; spelling bees at the school, descriptions of orchards in bloom, of sunsets that cast their glow over the harbor and its ships at anchor, young lovers caught in the magic of moonlit nights, the appearance of new life on the island without medical assistance—all these are missing. But they, too, are a part of the history of South Manitou.

One must remember that the island was a world in itself for the people who lived there. For George Johann Hutzler who settled there, it was the New World. For his son John, it was the only world he ever knew, certainly the only one in which he felt comfortable. As years went by, many of the Islanders left, each one taking his own recollections at a given point of time with him. Thus the island existed apart from itself in specific but quite different mental and social contexts for each of its former residents. I have found it impossible to portray life on the island from so many different perspectives.

What I have tried to do is to record as many historical facts as I know or as I could discover before they are forever lost. As Gerald Crowner expressed it so well:

> "Your letter reached me late last week and I am happy to learn that you are writing a book about South Manitou. South Island as we who lived there called it, is a beautiful island and is rich in historical lore. . . I regret that so much of its history was taken to the graves with those who lived there."

Unfortunately, this is all very true. Frame houses once built for bustling families have long been abandoned. The grey unpainted structures have fallen victims to wind and snow and rain and the hot sun of summertime. Wandering cows have been known to enter into what may once have been the living room of a fastidious matron. Windows askew and porches sagging over rotting beams can be seen in company with rose or lilac bushes in rank disorder. Frequently only the bushes tell where once a dwelling stood.

The years have gradually laid a cloak of silence and serenity over South Manitou. Those who loved and tended it and turned it into a thriving settlement are gone. Some of them lie in the cemetery situated on a gentle rise next to the road that leads to the old Burdick and Hutzler farms. Others are buried at secluded spots on the land they once tilled. Nature has reclaimed the island. Perhaps it never should have been settled. It was a preserve of the Great Spirit into which the white men from distant lands intruded.

The men who came to South Manitou or passed its shores in the early days were full of ambition, hope, and optimism. The *Lac de Michigami* gathered them in like a

big funnel and poured them out into the Midwest. The ships with sails or steamers belching smoke that carried them often sought the safety of South Manitou's harbor. There they lay protected from mountainous seas that threatened them, their cargoes, crews, and passengers. But the visiting steamers devoured whole forests. For a relatively short time they played a part in transforming the island into a thriving settlement. Then, with changes in patterns of transportation caused by train and truck, the island's economic viability came to an end. Gradually it was abandoned by the descendants of those who settled there. Its once beautiful lighthouse that guided thousands of ships through safe waters was darkened, its strong beacon no longer shining in the night. What remains today is only a landmark for drab, low-slung ore boats and tankers crawling through the Manitou Passage. The Great Lakes Naval Training Station tendered a final insult in the late 1920's when its ships used the island's western banks as a backstop for artillery practice.

In spite of these many changes, Louisa Hutzler Vent, who was born on the island in 1868 and later became a long-time resident of Chicago, always thought of the island as her home. Once she landed on its shores, her feet led her along familiar paths. The houses and their inhabitants may have disappeared, but in her memory they were still there—the Becks, the Haases, the Kitchens, the Burdicks, the Armstrongs, and many others. To preserve something of these memories and the memory of my mother, I have written the chapters that follow. But what I have written should also serve as a tribute to her parents, George and Margaretha Hutzler, and to others who are numbered among the island's early settlers. To those who so faithfully tended its light and manned its life-saving station my endeavors are also respectfully dedicated.

Now that South Manitou is becoming part of a national park, many visitors will come to anchor in the island's harbor and ask: What happened here? Who were the people who lived here? What did they do for a living? Where did they come from? What happened to them? What part did the island play in the settlement of the region? I hope this book will answer some of the questions.

For those who come to the island for the first time, I hope this account will enrich their visit as they explore the island's dunes and forests, its little lake, or view from its western bluffs the glorious sunsets on Lake Michigan. I hope it will help to make each visit to the southern home of the Great Spirit memorable and of lasting interest.

Finally, this recording about the past will, I trust, help to instill in many visitors a certain degree of awe and respect for the island's natural beauty and its vestiges of the past. In the East there is an island that has also recently come under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. The island is Fire Island. A marker on the island, given by a benefactor, bears the following inscription:

Enter here to enjoy,
But not to injure,
Nor destroy.

Introduction

"They forgot from whence they came.
They lost sight of what brought them along."

It was a late summer afternoon in 1934. I lay on the ground in the orchard of my grandfather's farm, chewing on a long piece of grass, enjoying to the full my vacation. The ground was hard but only moderately so. The thick grass bending under me formed a cushion. The earth made up of sandy loam smelled warm and good. The sun's rays penetrated through the branches of the cherry tree that spread over me and glistened on the smooth brown bark. A monarch butterfly fluttered past to light on the pink blossoms of a flowering milkweed. Nearby a cedar waxwing wheezed his melancholy note. The sound of waves breaking on the shore in the distance added to the languor that flowed through me. It was a peaceful spot I thought. What a relief from the din and crowds of the city!

I was alone, though not completely alone. Uncle John was somewhere about. Good old Uncle John with his corncob pipe, disheveled black hair, and twinkling brown eyes. And then there was my grandfather buried in the middle of the orchard only a few yards from where I lay. He had been there for a long time. I had never seen him. He had died in his 74th year some twenty-five years before I was born. But I knew he was a kindly man from the stories I had heard about him. He was also energetic. He had come to this island almost one-hundred years ago with his family.

As I lay there in that clean unobstructed air, I began to wonder what had led him to come to this country and what had caused him to settle on this particular spot in the Midwest. Where did he come from in Germany? When did he come? By what means—steam or sail? How long had he been married before he came? How many children came with him? Was he ever sorry that he had left the Old Country? These and many other questions ran through my mind. If only my grandfather could speak to me, how easy it would be to find answers. But the answers were buried with him, or so it seemed. As I lay there enjoying the peace and solitude, I decided to solve this mystery by one means or another.

When I got back to Chicago, I began by questioning my mother, but I soon discovered that she knew relatively little about the origin of her family. She was full of anecdotes but could provide no historical facts. My next best source was an 84-year-old aunt who had come over in the boat with her father and mother. Unfortunately she was only four years old at the time of the voyage. Nevertheless, she was a tremendous help in giving me clues. But even with her there were difficulties. She didn't exactly remember the name of the boat or the year in which it sailed or arrived. The embarkation point had been Hamburg and they disembarked in New York. By working back from her birth date, I surmised that my grandfather must have arrived in America with his family in 1854. As to the name of the boat, my aunt reported something like "Neptune Newton" and that it was a sailing vessel. I asked her many other questions and made notes of the answers.

But it was slow work. I was going to college at the time and was preoccupied with my studies. Then came the first years of establishing myself, followed by the war years, again to be followed by meeting the needs of a growing family.

Louisa Hutzler Vent and the author, as a child, standing next to the grave of George Johann Hutzler. Picture taken in the summer of 1920.

The orchard on the Hutzler farm as it appeared in springtime.

Over 30 years elapsed between that first questioning afternoon on South Manitou and a productive period of discovery. In between lay sporadic periods of research. Some of the research dealt with the social, political, and economic conditions both in Germany and the United States. I gradually understood what America meant to George Hutzler and I began to comprehend what a tremendous contribution the German immigrants made to the development of the United States and particularly to the Midwest.

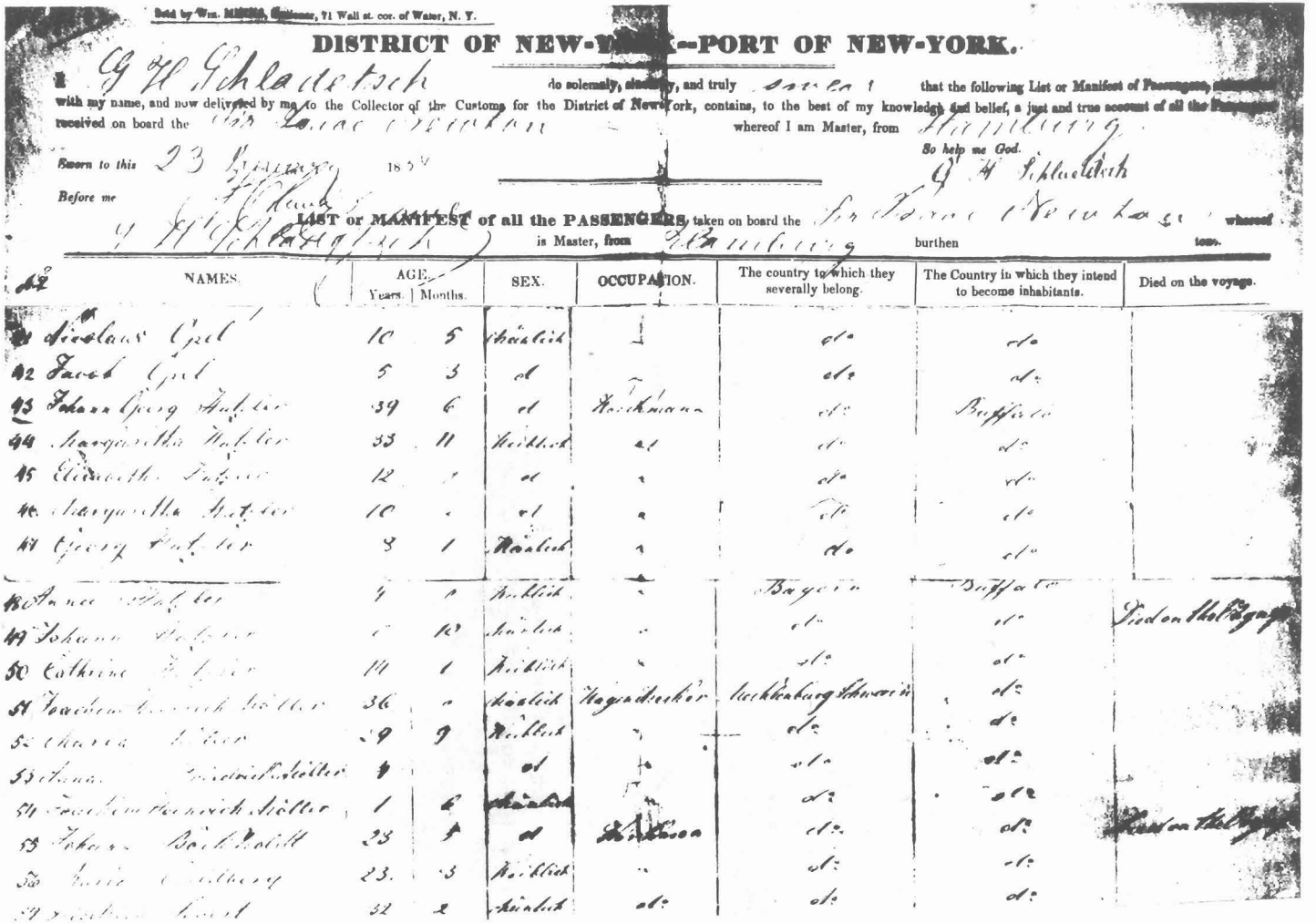
My research began in the Newberry Library in Chicago and finally ended in the Library of Congress and the National Archives. It also took me through second-hand bookstores from New Orleans and Boston to Liverpool and London. World War II provided me with an opportunity to visit the village from which my grandfather began his American odyssey.

Undoubtedly the most exciting event in trying to put this jigsaw puzzle together was the discovery of the passenger list in the National Archives. This great institution has a collection of manifests on micro-film of all the ships that docked in New York over an extended period of time. I made several futile attempts to locate the manifest that contained the names of my grandparents until one day I decided to look at lists from those ships that contained the names Neptune or Newton. I tried those with Neptune first with no success. It wasn't until I came across the *Sir Isaac Newton* that I reached my goal. It had made several trips in 1854, and I assumed that the Hutzlers would have come in the summer because of their small children. I found no trace of them. Many of the manifests are written in an almost illegible Victorian manner, or, worse yet, in German gothic script.

About to give up, I turned to the manifest of the *Sir Isaac Newton* that blew into New York harbor in January of 1854. I had proceeded only a short way down the list when I suddenly saw their names in a cluster. I sat almost transfixed. There they were, exactly as they had given them to Captain Schladetsch, the ship's pilot. George Hutzler was followed by the names of his wife and each of his children. There was also a half-sister of whom I vaguely recalled hearing. In the adjacent columns were their ages, sex, country from which departing and destination in America. A last column was used for recording deaths or births.

I now had something firm to work with. At long last I knew the name of the ship, the number on board, and the date of arrival in New York harbor. But there was no indication of the date on which they departed from Hamburg. Was it true as my aunt had said that the journey had lasted three months? This I thought must have been exaggerated. Three months on board a sailing vessel to cross the Atlantic? A letter was dispatched to the harbor authorities in Hamburg. The reply came back promptly with a bill to cover the research. The *Sir Isaac Newton* had set sail from Hamburg on October 21, 1853. They were enroute three months and three days! The pieces of the puzzle were falling into place.

But next to the Hutzler family and the conditions they left in Germany came the island itself. What was its history? Had Indians ever lived there? Who discovered it or had seen it first? Were there any written accounts about it before the Hutzlers arrived? Who settled there first? What were the conditions on the Great Lakes at that time? To find answers to these questions, I am much indebted for the suggestions of the Michigan Historical Commission. I also am indebted to Milo Quaife for his most excellent book in the Great Lakes Series entitled *Lake Michigan*. Leads from both of these sources led me to Harriet Martineau and to Margaret Fuller.



Sold by Wm. Miller, Stationer, 71 Wall st. cor. of Water, N. Y.

DISTRICT OF NEW-Y[illegible]K--PORT OF NEW-YORK.

I G H Schlaefstech do solemnly, sincerely, and truly swear [illegible] that the following List or Manifest of Passengers, [illegible] with my name, and now delivered by me to the Collector of the Customs for the District of New-York, contains, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a just and true account of all the Passengers received on board the Ship Isaac Newton whereof I am Master, from Amsterdam.

Sworn to this 23 February 1854 — So help me God. G H Schlaefstech

Before me [illegible]

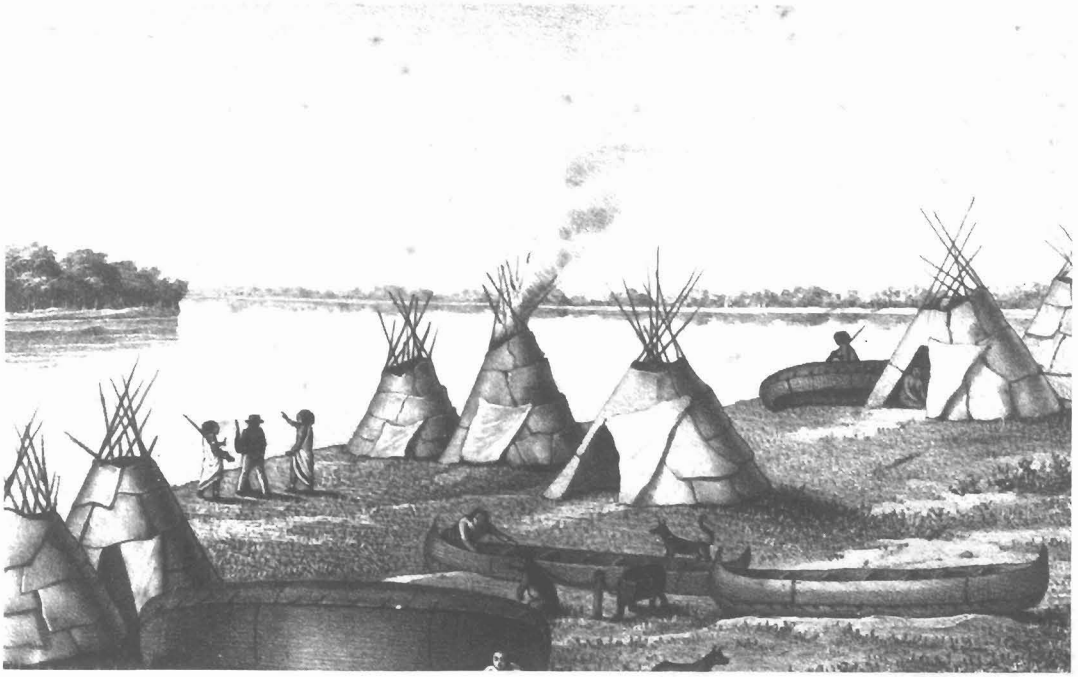
LIST or MANIFEST of all the PASSENGERS taken on board the Ship Isaac Newton whereof G H Schlaefstech is Master, from Amsterdam burthen [illegible] tons.

No.	NAMES.	AGE. Years.	Months.	SEX.	OCCUPATION.	The country to which they severally belong.	The Country in which they intend to become inhabitants.	Died on the voyage.
41	Nicolaus Gail	10	5	Male	[illegible]	do	do	
42	Jacob Gail	5	3	do		do	do	
43	Johann Georg Hafner	39	6	do	Bookbinder	do	Buffalo	
44	Margaretha Hafner	33	11	Female	do	do	do	
45	Elizabeth Hafner	12	[illegible]	do	[illegible]	do	do	
46	Margaretha Hafner	10	[illegible]	do	[illegible]	do	do	
47	Georg Hafner	8	1	Male	[illegible]	do	do	
48	Anna [illegible]	4	[illegible]	Female	[illegible]	Bayern	Buffalo	
49	Johann [illegible]	[illegible]	10	Male	[illegible]	do	do	Died on the Voyage
50	Cathrine [illegible]	11	1	Female	[illegible]	do	do	
51	Joachim [illegible] Müller	36	[illegible]	Male	Wagenmacher	Lichtenberg Hannover	do	
52	Chatrina [illegible]	29	9	Female	[illegible]	do	do	
53	Anna [illegible]	4		do	[illegible]	do	do	
54	Joachim Heinrich Müller	1	6	Male	[illegible]	do	do	
55	Johann [illegible]	33	1	do	Schlosser	do	do	Died on the Voyage
56	[illegible]	23	3	Female	[illegible]	do	do	
57	[illegible]	32	2	Male	do	do	do	

Portion of the manifest of the *Sir Isaac Newton*

Discovering Margaret Fuller was in itself an event. I could not help being fascinated with the remarkable accomplishments of this remarkable woman. Her life unfolded like a Greek tragedy. Seeking after happiness most of her life, she had no sooner found it when the Fates closed in and extinguished it at its beginning. For the Hutzlers, an island gave them security, prosperity, and hope for the future. For Margaret Fuller, South Manitou was only a point of passage, but another island was the end. That it should have happened so soon after her trip through the Lakes and that it should have been connected to some extent with the same circumstances that led the Hutzlers to leave Germany is a remarkable coincidence.

And so, in a way, it is not the Hutzler family which gives unity to the following chapters, but rather the island itself. It existed before the Hutzlers came and will be there long after the Hutzler name or the reader's name is forgotten. But the earthly remains of the Hutzlers have become a part of the island. Their footsteps still resound in its forest trails. And for a brief period they and the island contributed to the development of the vast region around Lake Michigan. The story of the Hutzlers is one of privation, industry, fortitude, and faith in the American Dream. And this faith was characteristic of the hundreds of thousands of German, Scandinavian, and Dutch immigrants who poured into the Middle West to make it the backbone of the Nation.



Library of Congress

Drawing by Count de Castlenau of an Indian village not far from the Island

National Park Service

South Manitou Island, seven miles distant from the mainland, as it might have been viewed by the Indians before the coming of the white men.

History and Legend

"In the beginning was the Great Manitou floating on a raft with many animals."

The early history of South Manitou Island is shrouded in legend. According to geologists, the island and its sister island, North Manitou, were left by a series of giant glaciers that gouged their way through the Great Lakes Region. The last glacier disappeared some 10,000 years ago and separated the two islands from each other and from the mainland with which they had been connected. At points the glacier was over 100 feet thick.

What happened to South Manitou Island between the time the glacier melted away and the white men came remains a mystery. We have little to guide us except the stories of the Indians. And there are not many of them. The Chippewa and Ottawa Indians who inhabited the nearby area looked upon South and North Manitou Islands as manifestations of the Great Spirit. Indian tradition, according to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, pictured the Great Manitou, in the beginning of all things, as a spirit floating on a raft with many animals. How natural it would be then for the Indians, as they looked across the water from the mainland, to name the two islands—the Manitous.

The most popular Indian legend about the islands tells the story of the mother bear and her two cubs who fled from a forest fire on the Wisconsin side of Lake Michigan. Plunging into the cool waters to escape the great heat, they swam toward the Michigan side. But as they neared the shore, the exhausted cubs sank beneath the waves. Once the mother bear was safe on land, she refused to go farther, but stood at the edge of the water peering into the murky atmosphere, hoping in vain to catch sight of the cubs. Tired and weary, she finally lay down and fell asleep. While she slept, the Great Manitou took pity upon her and raised the two cubs above the water where she could see them. From that day forth the mother bear never left the spot again. She remained faithful to her cubs, nestling on the great sand dune that now bears her name. Sleeping Bear Sand Dune, which is said to be the world's largest moving sand dune, lies in a southeasterly direction from the islands, some seven miles away.

Another Indian legend may account to some extent why the Indians failed to use the island. According to this legend, a powerful tribe of Indians from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan attacked a tribe in the Lower Peninsula and killed all but seven warriors. After the battle the victorious tribe sailed to the islands, where they bedded down for the night. During the night the seven warriors that had not been killed followed the victors and in the darkness almost annihilated them. Because the Indians who were left had not seen those who came quietly in the night, they blamed the deaths on evil spirits. After that, according to the legend, no Indians could be induced to live on the islands.

It is likely that with abundant game throughout the forests on the mainland and with fish plentiful along the shores, there was little aside from curiosity that might have encouraged the Indians to visit the islands. In any event, there are no indications that the Indians ever inhabited either North or South Manitou Island. Thus, they remained virgin territory covered with thick primeval forests of pine, cedar and

hemlock until the white man came. Most of the Indians who tented along the eastern shores of Lake Michigan in the summer time and retreated inland during the winter undoubtedly gazed at the islands in the distance filled with thoughts of awe and foreboding, hardly daring to cross the waters to explore them.

Who the first white man was to see the islands or to visit them can only be surmised. Most of the earliest French explorers in their attempts to find a route to China passed down the western shores of Lake Michigan. Nicolet is credited with having discovered Lake Michigan in 1634. Father Marquette, returning up the east coast from an exploration of the Mississippi, died before he could have seen the islands and was buried temporarily in 1675 on the site of Ludington. It is quite probable that the French traders, as they skirted the shore of the mainland in their big canoes or attempted to penetrate into the thick forests, were among the first white men to see the islands. The French missionaries, who frequently traveled with the explorers and fur traders, were certainly aware of them. As early as 1673 the islands appeared on Joliet's map which showed them located in the *Lac des Illinois ou Michigami.* The great French explorer, Robert Cavalier Sieur de la Salle, saw them in November 1680 as he passed down the east coast of the lake on his way to the Gulf of Mexico.

> "Those (islands) in the lake of the Illinois are a hazard on account of the sand bars which lie off them."

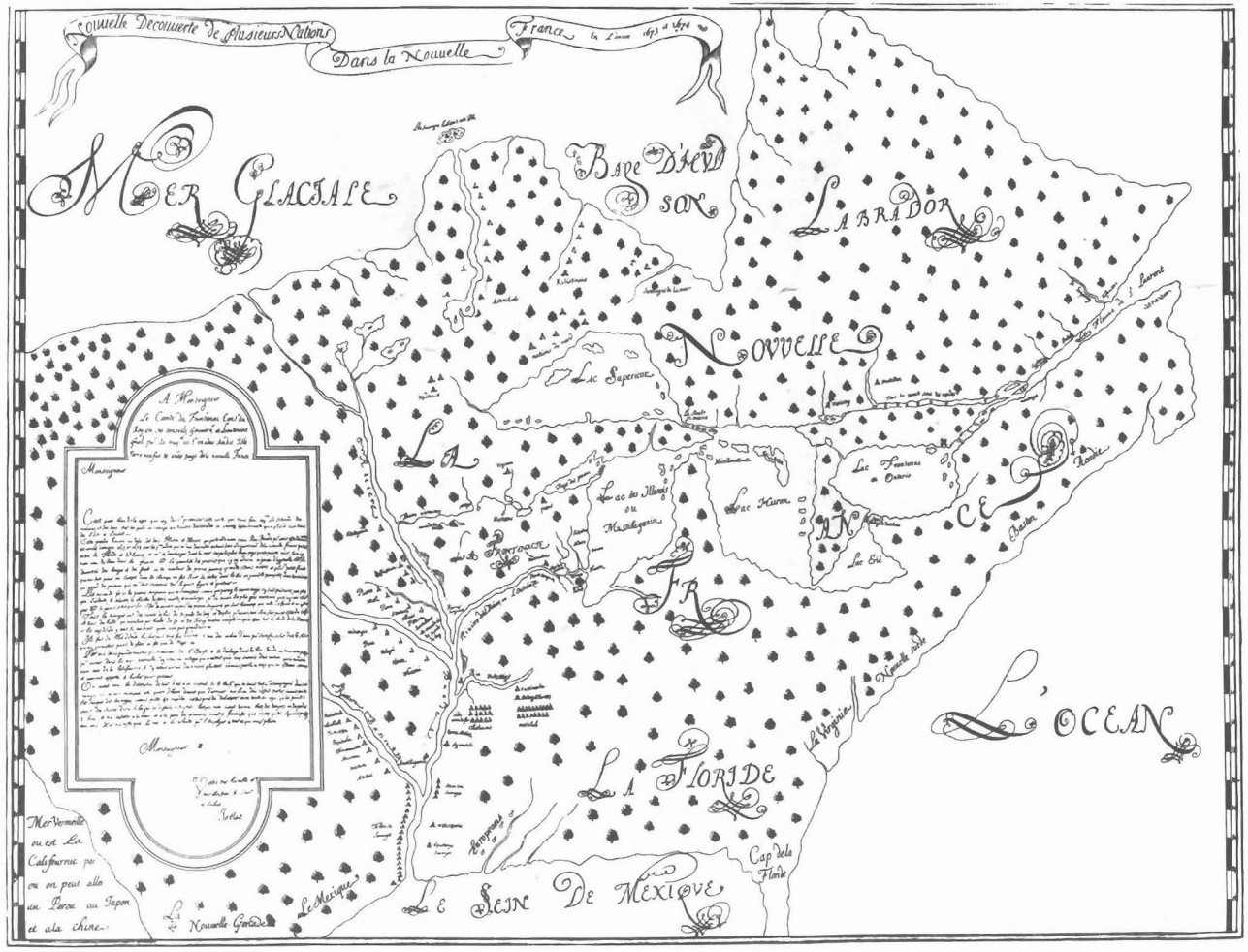
For over 100 years after the French explorers placed the islands on their map and LaSalle made his brief note, there is no written reference to the islands.

At the end of the French and Indian War in 1760, the islands along with the land west of the lake up to the Mississippi River were surrendered to the British. However, no perceptible change took place. The British, continuing the policy of the French, discouraged colonization in order to protect the fur trade. A royal proclamation forbade anyone to survey land or acquire it by patent or purchase from the Indians. So important was the fur trade in the entire area that until 1806 pelts were the principal medium of exchange. Those of the beaver were the most sought after, and the thickly wooded area of the western Michigan mainland abounded with them.

In 1779, during the Revolutionary War, the British at Mackinac sent His Majesty's sloop *Felicity*, under the command of Samuel Robertson, with a crew of eight men, to collect whatever provisions could be found along the shores of Lake Michigan to prevent their being used by the colonists. Having completed its mission, the *Felicity* left Milwaukee heading back for Mackinac. However across the lake the ship sought safety at the Manitous in view of an approaching storm. Captain Robertson's log records:

> "We came to anchor under the lea of the northmost of these islands, it looking very black to North, I did not think it prudent to proceed farther."

With the end of the Revolutionary War, the islands were incorporated into the Northwest Territory of the United States. In 1800 they became part of the Indiana Territory, and five years later part of the Territory of Michigan of which Detroit was named the capital.



Library of Congress

MAP BY JOLIET (1673) — The location of the islands is quite distinct, while the contours of the hinterland bear little resemblance to their actual shape, indicating greater knowledge of and traffic on the waterways.

Library of Congress

Canoes, bearing French traders or *voyageurs*, were frequently 35 to 40 feet long and carried as much as five tons of freight and a crew.

But the destiny of the islands and the Michigan Territory came in doubt in 1812 with General Hull's surrender of Detroit to the British. For almost a year the area was again under British control until Admiral Perry defeated "the British Navy" on Lake Erie, and the U.S. Army under General Harrison recaptured Detroit. The entire area around the Great Lakes was in constant turmoil during the war years. It was at this time that the British successfully aroused the Indians against the Americans culminating in the massacre at Fort Dearborn, the future site of the city of Chicago.

Within hardly more than ten years after the War of 1812, two events took place which assured a role for the Manitou Islands in the development of the Midwest. The first was the introduction of steamboats on the Great Lakes in 1818 with the launching of the famous *Walk-on-the-Water*. The second was the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. The effect of these events was, of course, not immediate. Fur trading continued, actually reaching its peak in 1830. But by 1840 settlers and lumberjacks began a steady inroad into the forest where the fur-bearing animals lived.

The first travellers to leave written accounts of their visits to South Manitou came in wood-burning steamers. The phrase: "We stopped at the Manitous to refuel," leaves one in doubt at times which of the islands is meant. Nonetheless, descriptions of these visits up to the time of the first settlers include reports by a variety of characters including Harriet Martineau, a lady of note from England, and Margaret Fuller, one of the most noteworthy American ladies of all times.

Early Visitors

"The island will be seen rising majestically
off the port bow as the ship approaches the Passage."

Henry Rowe Schoolcraft

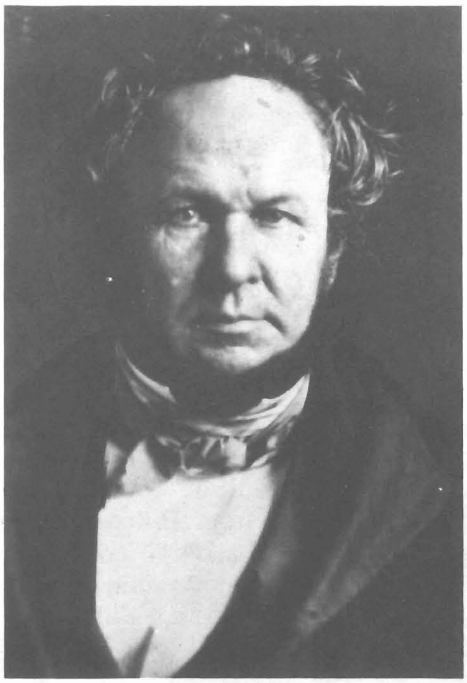
The first American to leave a written record of having seen the islands, though not to have visited them, is Henry Rowe Schoolcraft. He was born in Hamilton, New York, in 1793, the son of an army colonel. Having a strong interest in the West, he travelled to the Indian mounds of Illinois, then to the Ozarks, and south to New Orleans. In 1819 he published a book on his travels which came to the attention of the Secretary of War, John Calhoun. Calhoun was so impressed that he appointed Schoolcraft to an expedition under Lewis Cass, Governor of the Michigan Territory.

The purpose of Governor Cass's expedition was to explore "the North-Western Region of the United States extending from Detroit through the Great Chain of American Lakes to the sources of the Mississippi River." It was on this expedition that Schoolcraft noted the islands in his journal as he proceeded up the eastern shores of Lake Michigan. On September 7, 1820, he made the following entry:

> "We embarked at daylight. In going thirteen miles we passed a small stream called Platte river; and nine miles beyond reached a noted point on the east shore of the lake called the Sleeping Bear. The shore of the lake here consists of a bank of sand, probably 200 feet high, and extending eight or nine miles without vegetation, except a small hillock about the center which is covered with pines and poplars, and has served to give name to the place, from a rude resemblance it has when viewed at a distance, to a couchant bear. There are two islands off this part of the coast in plain view from the shore, which are called the Sleeping Bear Islands."

In addition to keeping a journal, Schoolcraft collected Indian legends current among the Chippewas who inhabited the Michigan penninsula. Little did he think, when he joined the expedition, that he would settle in Michigan and take an Indian wife. He married the half-breed granddaughter of Chief Wabojeeg of the Chippewas. His collection of Indian legends was published in 1839 under the title: *Algic Researches.* It was this book that provided Henry Wadsworth Longfellow with the material he needed to write his world-famous poem *Hiawatha.* Longfellow himself acknowledged his debt to Schoolcraft and sent him a personal copy when the poem was published. We can also thank Schoolcraft for the Indian names given to various counties in Michigan.

Between the time that Schoolcraft noted the islands in his journal, sixteen years passed before Harriet Martineau gazed upon them during her tour through the Midwest. They were sixteen years of important development in the life of the new nation. With the completion of the Erie Canal, streams of immigrants from Europe were pouring through it into the area. Shipping on the lakes had increased tremendously. During the year 1836, over 500 vessels passed through the Straits of Michilimackinac into Lake Michigan. The first lighthouses were set up and work was started to clear harbors of sandbars.



Library of Congress

An early daguerreotype of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, made while he was stationed on Mackinac Island as Indian Agent for the U.S. Government on the Northwest Frontier.

Harriet Martineau

Miss Martineau, an Englishwoman of some literary reputation in her time, visited the United States much as an American, earlier in this century, might have visited Africa. Like many other Europeans, she was interested to see the Great Plains—that tremendous expanse of prairie stretching farther than the eye could see. On returning East in 1836, she embarked at Chicago aboard a ship named the *Milwaukee.* The ship's captain had never before sailed on Lake Michigan. As Miss Martineau pointed out, the lake had not yet been properly surveyed. Parts of it were still a mystery.

The ship sailed from Chicago to Milwaukee and left there on July 3, 1836. The crew and passengers were in a hurry to reach Mackinaw to witness the celebration of Independence Day. But Miss Martineau herself was afraid they might sail past the Manitou Islands in the dark. Once into the middle of the lake, the ship became encircled with fog which lasted until late in the day. When it finally lifted, they suddenly saw "the high sandy shores of Michigan." The captain reported that they were off Cape Sable, some forty miles south of the Manitou Islands. Miss Martineau tells the rest:

"We were up before five on the morning of the 4th of July to see the Manitou Isles, which were just then coming in sight. They are the Sacred Isles of the Indians to whom they belong. Manitou is the name of their Great Spirit and of everything sacred. It is said they believe these islands to be the resort of the spirits of the departed. They are two: sandy and precipitous at the south and clothed with wood, from the crest of the cliffs to the north extremity, which slopes down gradually to the water.

It was a cool, sunny morning, and these dark islands lay still and apparently deserted, on the bright green waters. Far behind, to the south, were two glittering white sails on the horizon. They remained in sight all day, and lessened the feeling of loneliness which the navigators of these vast lakes cannot but have while careening among the solemn islands and shores. On our right lay the Michigan shore, high and sandy, with the dark eminence called the Sleeping Bear, conspicuous on the ridge. No land speculators have set foot here yet. A few Indian dwellings, with evergreen woods and sandy cliffs are all. Just here Mr. D pointed out to us a schooner of his which was wrecked in a snow storm the preceding November. She looked pretty and forlorn, lying on her side in that desolate place, seeming a mere plaything thrown in among the cliffs."

As favorably impressed as Miss Martineau was with the islands and Sleeping Bear, she found much else in America that displeased her. Upon her return to England, she wrote a book highly critical of her American cousins. Needless to say, the book raised a storm of protest in this country. Among those who protested was Margaret Fuller.

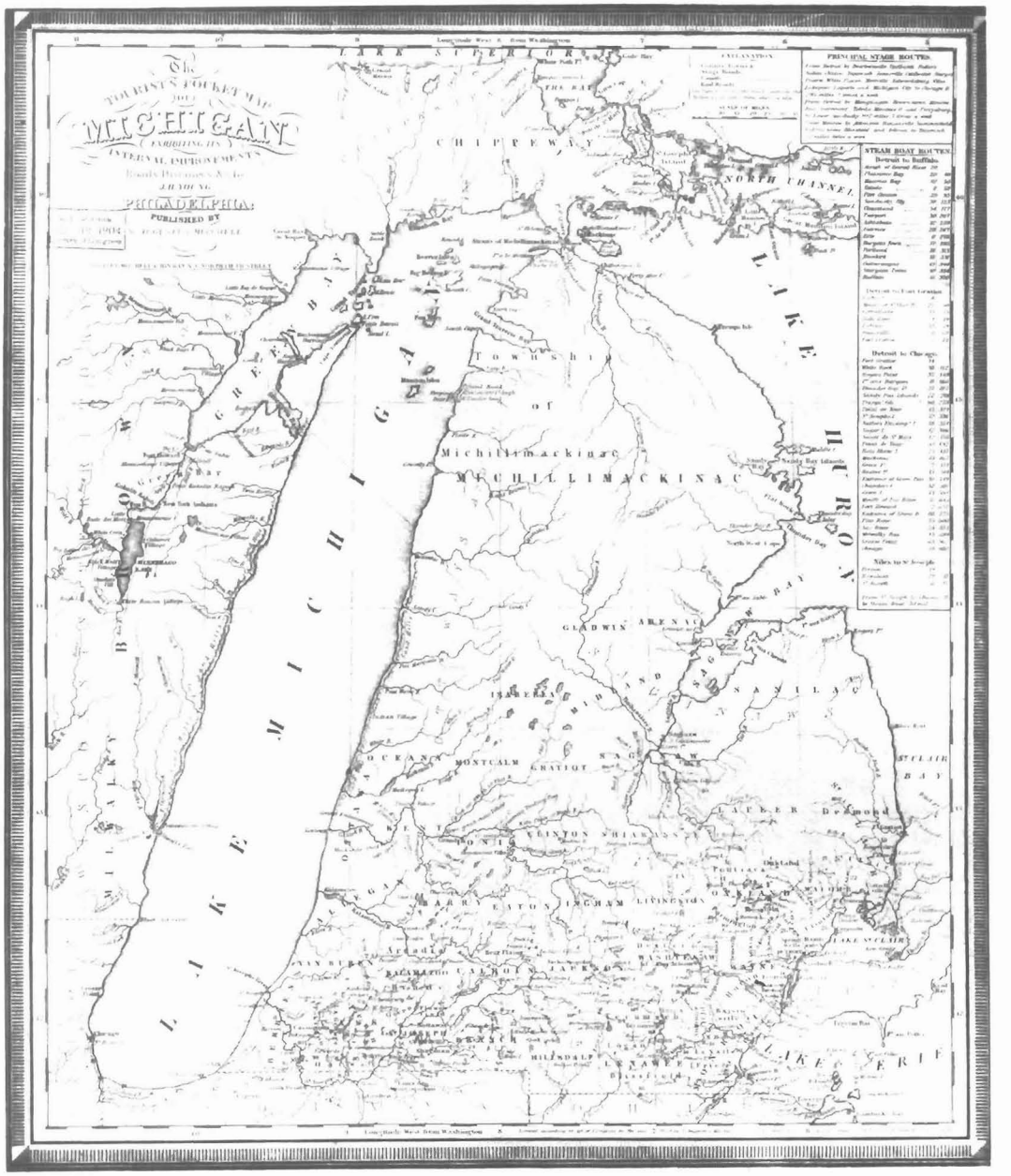
Lt. G. J. Pendergrast

Undoubtedly it was wrecks such as that described by Martineau that led the Federal Government to send two naval lieutenants, Lt. G. J. Pendergrast and Lt. James T. Homans, into the area in search of the best locations for beacons to guide the growing shipping on Lake Michigan. Lt. Pendergrast carried out his mission and made the following report to the Board of Navy Commissioners on August 18, 1837:

"On passing from the straits, you enter Lake Michigan, leaving the Beaver and Fox islands on the right and keeping the eastern shore for the distance of sixty miles or so, until you pass the Manitou island. From thence to the head of the Lake, if a vessel keeps two or three miles from the shore, she will meet no difficulty except for want of harbors. I may here remark that a light house is very much wanted on the south end of South Manitou Island. It should be a revolving light to distinguish it from other lights."

Thomas Nye

Shortly after Lt. Pendergrast visited the island, Thomas Nye set out from Montreal on a trip to Chicago. Nye was born in 1801 in Massachusetts and attended the University of Vermont. He then went to Montreal where he studied law and was admitted to the bar in Lower Canada. Having reached the age of thirty-six, he undertook the trip to Chicago to solicit the hand of Corinna Bowman, the daughter of an old friend. By November 11, 1837 he reached Detroit where he embarked on the steamer *Constellation.* Two days later the steamer arrived at Mackinac where a load of wood was put on and Mr. Nye had the opportunity to see fine trout of 25 to



Mitchell's Map of Michigan, 1835

Although the Manitou Islands appear on the map, Leelanau County does not yet exist and is hardly discernible in its present form. Sleeping Bear is identified, but there are no settlements on the mainland opposite the island.

30 pounds sold for 50 cents, while white fish brought a dollar a dozen. On November 14, the steamer arrived at South Manitou:

> "At 8:30 p.m. we arrived at the Manitou Isles to wood; sandy beach appearing wooded with spruce; went on shore. Saw on the bottom small stones distinctly at fourteen foot depth of water. At 10:30 o'clock and no moon out. Drank some on shore and cut canes and got a variety of stones and pebbles, and sacrificed a three-blade knife to the Manitou, throwing it overboard with the stones. . . 15 November 1837, 4 o'clock A.M. left Manitou Island and at 7 o'clock—sun just appearing—almost directly at starboard easterly, just appearing the Sleeping Bear Bank, 707 feet high and six miles long. A beautiful bank, perfectly regular, like a canal bank of which sand, light and drifting or blowing away covers trees and kills them, the dead tops just appearing above ground. And then on the centre appears to lie and repose a huge black bear, being a clump of trees of that shape clearly visible at 40 or 60 miles distant."

And so Mr. Nye proceeded across the lake to Milwaukee and thence to Chicago. Happily, Corinna Bowman accepted his offer of marriage and the two were wedded on December 5, 1837.

Lt. James T. Homans

The following year Lt. James Homans presented a report to the Secretary of the Treasury, which reveals that he had been on South Manitou to determine its suitability for a lighthouse. Lt. Homan's report, in conjunction with that of Lt. Prendergrast, assured the future of the island as a haven for shipping in the area.

> "I made the choice of a site for the lighthouse upon a high knoll on which a stake was placed appropriately marked; the bearing of it per compass, from the house near the steamboat landing, South by East. There can be little dispute as to this point being the best for the lighthouse it being open to the course of vessels going up or down the lake, and abundant depth of water within a few yards of the point for the largest craft. The knoll referred to is about thirty feet above the level of the lake, but being formed of sand on the surface, will have to be well excavated to make a safe foundation for the lighthouse buildings. The other point of land forming this harbor is very low, and unfit for erection of any buildings on it, it is also shut in from sight of the usual track of vessels. As all the steamboats sailing on the upper lakes visit this place for a supply of fuel, or for shelter in storms (for the latter purpose used by all other vessels) thus continually in use by some of the shipping, the need is urgent for the early construction of the lighthouse here. I saw within it, during one twenty-four hours of my stay there, a number of vessels, the aggregate of whose tonnage was 2,000 tons. The value of this harbor is more enhanced by its being the only one admitting the largest vessels in all weather, in the direct route between the Straits of Michilimackinac and Chicago—a distance of 300 miles."

On July 7, 1838, the Congress appropriated $5,000 "for erecting a lighthouse on South Manitou Island, Lake Michigan, in the State of Michigan." Actual expenditures amounted to $4,567.

Francis Count de Castlenau

The year 1838 also marked the visit of the young French naturalist, Francis Count de Castlenau. At only twenty-six years of age, he undertook a visit to America which led him down the East Coast to Florida and the Gulf of Mexico and later to the

Great Lakes. His visit resulted in a book: *Vues et Souvenirs de l'Amerique du Nord*, published in Paris in 1842. Like most Europeans of the time, he was extremely interested in Indians. This led him to visit Schoolcraft, "who received him with a noble and touching hospitality."

On the day Castlenau arrived for his visit, some 4,000 Indians, chiefly of the Ottawa and Chippewa tribes, gathered on Mackinac Island to receive annuities from the U.S. Government. At this time Schoolcraft was Indian Agent for the U.S. on the Northwest frontiers. The young count was impressed with the dignity and paternal manner with which Schoolcraft, whom he judged to be about fifty-five years of age, dealt with the Indians, speaking to them in their own language and giving them advice and counsel. The count was also impressed with Mrs. Schoolcraft. Instead of an Indian squaw, he found a person "as remarkable by her pleasing qualities as by her lofty spirit and extensive knowledge."

It was on his way to visit Schoolcraft that Castlenau became acquainted with the Manitou Passage and under the most adverse conditions placed on paper his impression of Sleeping Bear. Undoubtedly the inclement weather blotted the islands from his sight.

> "In attempting to enter Lake Michigan we were assailed by a frightful storm. After a short while our rudder was broken, one of the paddle wheels was carried away, and the two smoke stacks were bent by the hurricane; it was midnight and the captain had completely lost his course. During the entire night, we were a plaything of the giant waves that pushed us toward the immense bank of sand called (l'Ours endormi) the Sleeping Bear, which on the west coast of Michigan, rises three hundred feet to its bald and sterile crest.
>
> "At break of day we discovered the dreaded cliff a mile or more from the ship extending like a long ribbon whose whiteness makes a singular contrast in the midst of the dark waves which beat against its flank with fury, and the menacing mists which roll about its head. The winds were unchained and pushed us with the speed of lightning to our certain ruin.
>
> "Several hundred immigrants, men, women, and children were on board enroute to the plains of Illinois. Nothing can describe the scene of confusion that passed before our eyes, the crashing of thunder, the noise of the chests thrown about on board, the cries of the sailors, the terror of the women, the wailing of the children, the despair of most. Only one old lady was calm and resigned. Alone in the world, life had little charm left for her; and she thought that in a few moments she would rejoin her only son massacred the year before by the savages.
>
> "Two anchors were on board and on them rested our only hope. One of them was dropped overboard but the cable broke immediately. The second one was thrown. Only a single rope separated us from eternity. The silence was profound, no one dared to breathe. . . But a violent jolt was felt; then a long cry of joy followed. The anchor had taken hold; we were saved.
>
> "I have seen the storms of the Channel, those of the Ocean, the squalls off the banks of Newfoundland, those on the coasts of America, and the hurricanes of the Gulf of Mexico. No where have I witnessed the fury of the elements comparable to that found on this fresh water sea."

Happily Count de Castlenau and his boat weathered the storm and in the very midst of it, with the *sang froid* of youth, he left his awesome impression of Sleeping Bear.

Following his visit to the United States, he went on to explore the wilds of Brazil and the unknown reaches of Central Africa.

Margaret Fuller

The next person to leave a written account of a visit to the vicinity was Margaret Fuller, famous in American literature. Briefly, it can be said that Margaret Fuller would have been a remarkable woman according to the standards of any age. Scholar, teacher, transcendentalist, feminist, editor, translator, journalist, abolitionist, revolutionary, and finally a loving wife and mother, her short life was one not only of recurring accomplishment but of sadness and tragedy. She was, as far as we know, the island's most famous visitor.

Born in 1810, in Cambridgeport, Massachusetts, she was the eldest daughter of a lawyer from whom, at an early age, she learned Latin and Greek. To these languages she added French, Italian, Spanish, and German. To Margaret, as a transcendentalist, the human spirit was a reflection of the divine, and the human will, its manifestation. She had no patience for mediocrity, sham, or pseudo-intellecutalism. This, coupled with her almost brutal frankness, made many fear her if not admire her. According to Emerson, she was capable of saying to her friends: "I know all the people worth knowing in America, and I find no intellect comparable to my own."

This aspect of her character is even apparent in the few paragraphs she wrote about the island. It is also reflected in her criticism of the passengers on the boat. Noting that most of them were New Englanders seeking their fortunes in the West, she wrote that she grew tired of hearing them say what they would get in their new location. The prospect, as she put it, was not one of "unfolding nobler energies, but of more ease and accumulation." At the island on June 14, 1843, she wrote:

> "In the afternoon we went on shore at the Manitou Islands, where the boat stops to wood. No one lives here except woodcutters for the steamboats. I had thought of such a position from its mixture of profound solitude with service to the great world as possessing an ideal beauty. I think so still, after seeing the woodcutters and their slovenly huts. . . On the most beautiful beach of smooth white pebbles, interspersed with agates and cornelians, for those who know how to find them, we stopped, not like the Indian with some humble offering. . . to please the Manitou, but S. and I., like other emigrants, went not to give but to get, to rifle the wood of flowers for the service of the fire-ship. We returned with a rich booty among which was the *uva ursi* whose leaves the Indians smoke, with the kinnick-kinnick, and which had then just put forth its highly-finished little blossoms, as pretty as those of the blueberry."

The year following her visit to the island, Margaret published her *Summer on the Lakes.* Horace Greeley, the noted editor of the *New York Tribune*, greeted it as being "one of the clearest and most graphic delineations, ever given of the Great Lakes, of the Prairies, and of the receding barbarism, and the rapidly advancing, but rude, repulsive semi-civilization, which were contending with most unequal forces for the possession of those rich lands."

Three years later, at the age of thirty-seven while in Rome, Margaret met and fell in love with an Italian nobleman some ten years younger than herself. The two were married secretly because her husband, the Marquis Ossoli, was an officer in the Papal Guards and Margaret was already involved in the Italian revolutionary movement. In 1850, just seven years after her visit to the Manitou Islands, Margaret and her

husband fled to America only to lose their lives when their ship, the barque *Elizabeth*, broke in pieces in the surf off Fire Island not far from New York.

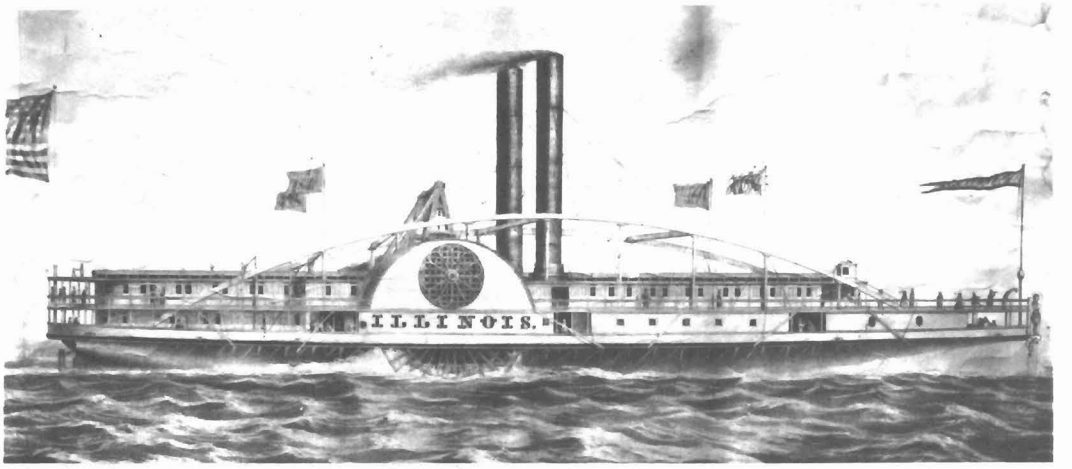
Andrew Rundel

Three years after Margaret Fuller's cruise through the Great Lakes, Andrew Rundel sailed from Chicago in a wood-burning steamer to try his luck as a copper prospector in the Upper Penninsula. Enroute his ship stopped at the Manitous to fuel. Rundel's account is not only interesting for his impression of the islands, but for the description of the development which had already taken place by 1843 on the western shores of Lake Michigan. Unfortunately, Rundel did not find the islands as stately and as beautiful as other visitors. This may have been because of Rundel's queasy stomach after an encounter with heavy seas in entering the Manitou Passage:

> "Our boat stood up the Illinois side of the lake. We passed Littleport, Racine, Milwaukie and Che-boy-a-gun and then stood for the Michigan shore. All the above ports we stopped at—Racine 25 or 30 miles before reaching Milwaukie is a beautifull place being elevated on a high piece of ground that overlooks the lake. The buildings all new and some of them handsome gave it a fine appearance. It has a population of near two thousand inhabitants. Milwaukie is also a fine business place and has a population of about five thousand.
>
> Soon after leaving the west Shore of the lake we were out of Sight of land. This was the first time I ever was out of sight of land. I had never formed a correct Idea of the lake before. Nothing on every side but water. The heavens above and earth beneath perhaps 900 or 1000 feet below.
>
> We now had a head wind so heavy that our boat began to labor heavy to make head way. And now after Six or Seven hours that land could not be seen we came in sight of the Manitoe Islands—the wind increased until we had a pretty good gail. We were Six hours in gaining the Island twelve miles distance. Here we lay until Sometime in the night we put out for Mackinaw. The Island and all of the Michigan Shore as far as I could see present a baran and gloomy appearance. The country is covered with dwarf pine or stunted Cedar or hemlock. And to me had anything but a pleasant appearance. Some of the passengers tried to see beauty in the Manatue Islands and the evergreen that covered everything but I must confess it was but little beauty I could get out of it."

Whether Mr. Rundel ever found the copper he was looking for, I do not know. There is no indication that he ever returned to the islands.

And so, the first half of the nineteenth century drew to a close. Many people had visited the islands and the vicinity, but very few had settled there. Nevertheless, South Manitou Island now had a wharf, a lighthouse, lighthouse keeper, and a small number of men who served the needs of boats that came there to fuel or to deliver supplies for shipment to points on the mainland which otherwise were inaccessible to larger vessels. The island's reputation was already established among sailors as a haven from storms that with unexpected suddenness swept the lake clear. It only remained to be discovered by weary but industrious immigrants already streaming into the region in search of a new home and a new way of life.



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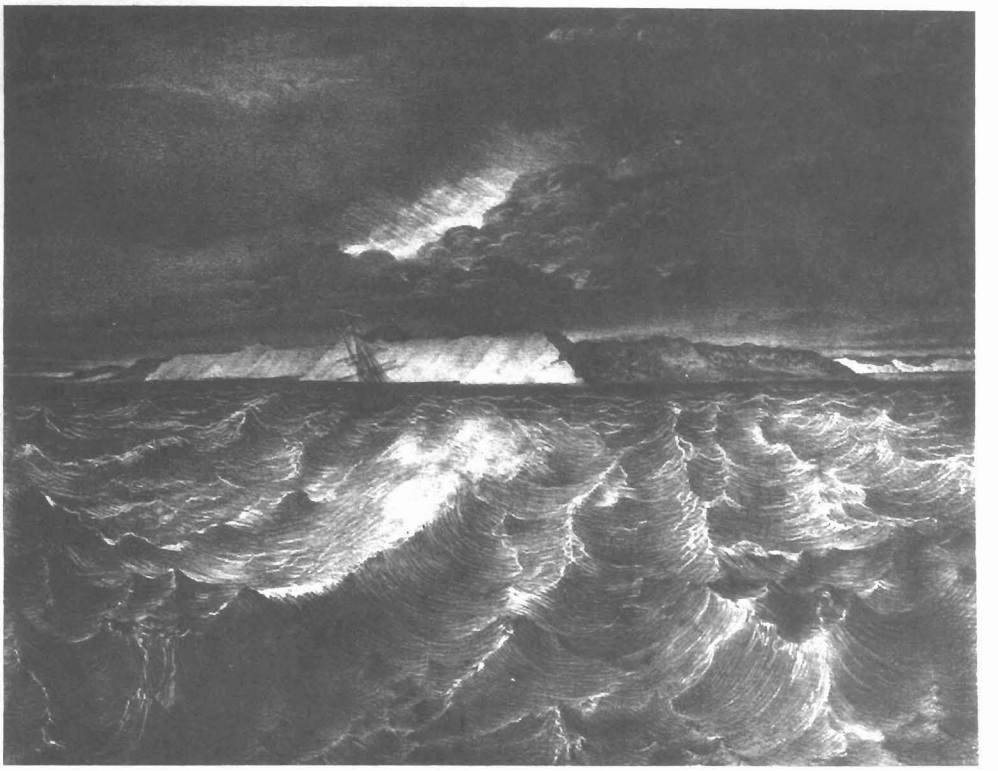
The *S.S. Illinois* is typical of the early woodburning steamers that sailed the Great Lakes. It was on a similar steamer, the *S.S. Iowa,* that George Hutzler found employment and first saw South Manitou.



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Sleeping Bear Sand Dune as it looked to Count de Castlenau in 1838 in the midst of a storm. The lithograph was made from a drawing by the young French nobleman.

The Hutzlers

"To the west, to the west, to the land of the free
Where mighty Missouri rolls down to the sea;
Where a man is a man if he's willing to toil,
And the humblest may gather the fruits of the soil."
Emigrants' Song

George Johann Hutzler was born on June 23, 1814, in the village of Oberkrumbach located in that part of Bavaria which is called the Franconian Switzerland. He was born of humble parents in humble surroundings and was brought up in the Lutheran faith in an area which had remained Lutheran from the time of the Reformation. As a young man he joined the Bavarian army and, after serving two terms, was given an honorable discharge.

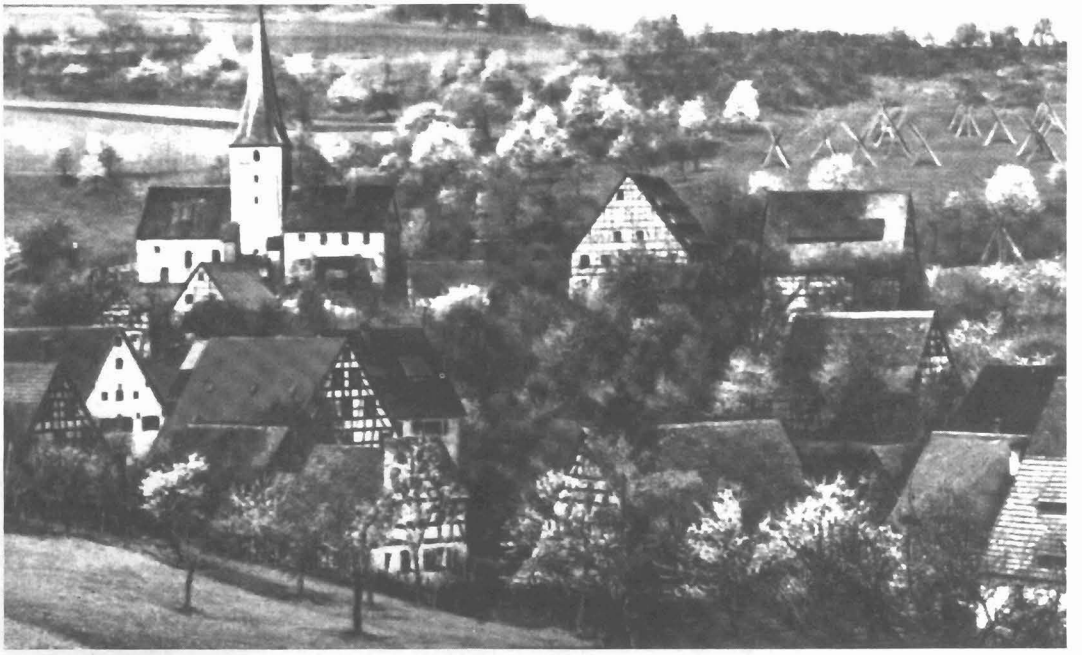
At the age of twenty-eight, George married Margaretha Ziegler from the neighboring village of Aspertshofen. Little is known about the families the two young people came from. George was named after his father who wove baskets, raised hops, and was sometimes employed as a lime burner. The baskets and hops were sold in the market square of the nearby town of Hersbruck, where Margaretha's uncle was a minister.

The young couple was married on June 26, 1842. Margaretha came to live with her husband in Oberkrumbach. The following year a daughter was born and named Elizabeth after Margaretha's mother. A second daughter was named after Margaretha herself. By 1853 the family had grown to five children. In addition to the two girls, there were now Georg, Anna, and Johann. To meet the needs of a growing family, George Hutzler decided to emigrate to America. This was not the decision of foolhardy youth. He was already almost forty years of age. One can only assume that he was close to desperation.

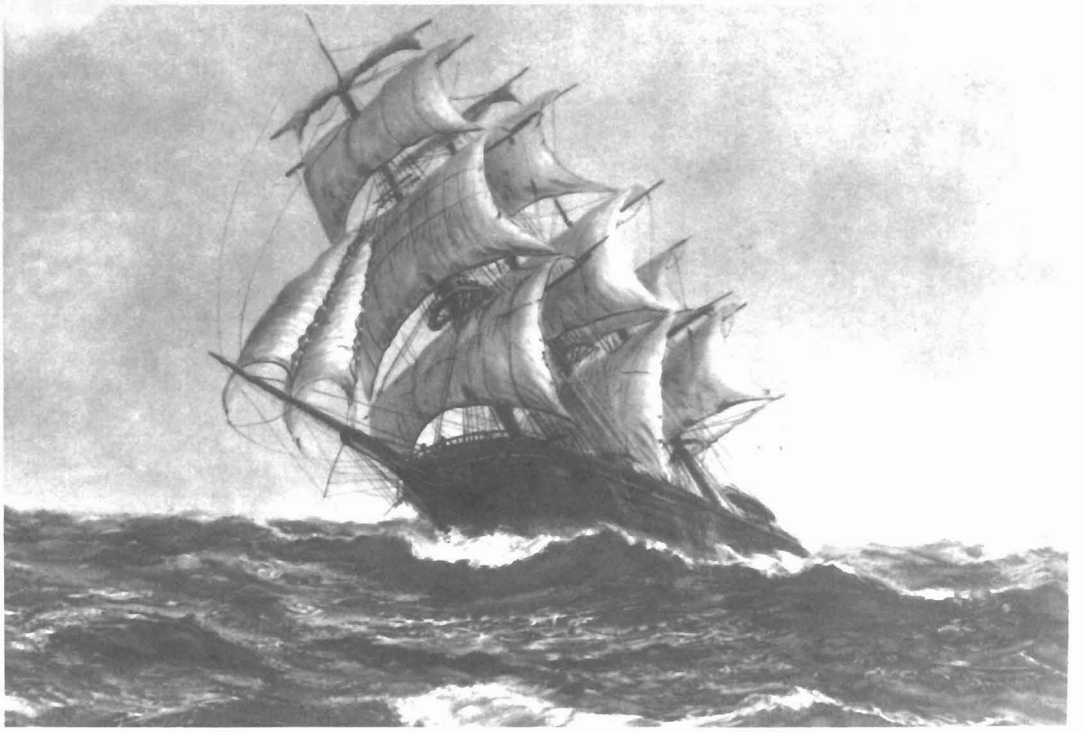
The Revolutions of 1848-49 had caused turmoil and unrest throughout Europe. It was from this unrest that Margaret Fuller and her husband had fled only three years earlier. In Germany, those who looked toward the weakening of autocratic controls and the possible unification of the state under some form of republican government were bitterly disappointed. On top of this, economic conditions, which were bad throughout the whole of Europe, showed no signs of improvement. "There is no future for my children here," George said to his wife and proposed that they try their luck in the New World.

At a time when whole villages in Germany were emigrating to the United States, it is no wonder that George might have heard of opportunities in America from friends and acquaintances. Then too, American agents travelled throughout Germany extolling life in the New World. Some states like Michigan sent agents of their own with booklets printed in German describing the advantages of settling in their particular state.

Whether George Hutzler saw any of these booklets or whether he heard about the United States while he sat in the local inn over a glass of beer is difficult to say. In any event the decision was made to leave. The house which he shared with his growing family he sold to his half-brother. Other arrangements were made throughout the year 1853 until by fall everything was ready for their departure. The trip would probably have been attempted earlier, but Margaretha was with child and



From this little village, buried in the hills of Franconia (Frankenland), the Hutzlers set out for America in 1853.



Somewhere in the North Atlantic. The Old World far behind, the New World ahead.

securing tickets for a transatlantic voyage on a definite date was not easy. Many Europeans wishing to go to the States had to wait months if not years before space in a vessel was available. It was undoubtedly this situation that prevented them from attempting the trip earlier. It was also this situation which caused them to cross the North Atlantic in a sailboat in midwinter. Having booked passage on the barque *Sir Isaac Newton*, they bade farewell to their parents and friends and set out for Hamburg by coach.

One can readily imagine the difficulty in leaving a small village like Oberkrumbach. One did not part easily from friends and relatives. There came, inevitably, the last Sunday in church when the minister asked God's blessing on the departing family and the congregation sang heartily: "*Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott.*" Undoubtedly friends gathered to wish them well and drank a solemn toast to their health and a safe voyage. There was also a last walk along the banks of the brook, past familiar sights they would no longer see. It is said that in Germany on the evening before the departure, friends would stand outside the house and sing a round of happy songs until the door was opened and they filed in for a last shaking of hands and words of farewell.

During the days of the sailing ships, the actual date of sailing depended entirely upon the weather. Those who held tickets were notified when they should be in the port city and then warned that the boat would leave with next most favorable wind. Some arrivals hardly had time to buy what they needed for the voyage. Others spent several weeks in the harbor town usually in unsatisfactory quarters.

On the day of departure from Hamburg, Margaretha must have taken heart at seeing other families getting on board. The Opels, who were in line in front of the Hutzlers, were a family of eight. The Von Thurns nearby were a family of seven. The entire passenger list was composed of Germans, although not a single passenger was so listed. The passengers came from eleven separate German states. The largest numbers came from Bavaria and Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Ten families came from the Grand Duchy of Weimar. As to destination, most of them gave places in the Middle West. The Hutzlers named Buffalo as their destination. All passengers had to be listed with names and ages. It is possible that Buffalo was given as the destination by many emigrants because it was the terminal point of the Erie Canal and a good location from which to explore the possibility of settlement farther west.

In leaving Hamburg by sailing ship, only the most direct wind could be used to steer the ship through the English Channel. Hence delays in sailing were frequent. While waiting for departure, an emigrant family could easily use up its supplies intended for the voyage.

On October 21, 1853, the *Sir Isaac Newton* with flags flying and sails unfurled lifted anchor for the New World. It was an exciting moment for all on board. Most of the passengers had never been on a ship before. There were, no doubt, tears mixed with cheers but the overall impression was one of joy. The trip would end in a new country where every man would be rewarded according to his willingness to work. There was no privileged class there. Opportunity was ahead for everyone.

But thoughts of the future vanished at the approach of the first storm. Passengers were ordered off the decks and into the hold. Sailors closed the hatches. The holds were lit by dim lanterns swaying to and fro. The air grew foul but the sound of the ship as it battled the waves was worse. Dreadful sounds filled the air. The wind howled, the ship creaked, giant waves broke overhead causing the ship to lurch and

throwing people against one another or causing chests to break loose from their fastenings. Pots and pans rolled constantly back and forth. Children cried while elders prayed. For many passengers, this seemed to be the end of what many had thought was a glorious beginning.

During one such storm, the *Sir Isaac Newton* emerged with a broken rudder. The crew worked to repair it but progress was slow. The ship reputedly drifted into southern waters. As weeks lengthened into months, many of the passengers despaired of ever seeing land again. Provisions grew low and fear of starvation spread. And then, at long last, the shores of the promised land spread before their view. There was great elation. Three months and three days from the time it left Hamburg, the *Sir Isaac Newton* docked in New York harbor!

January 23, 1854, was a happy day for the weary travellers, but not all of those who boarded the ship set foot in the New World. Of 154 passengers, seven of them lost their lives. Among them was the ten-month-old Johann Hutzler who was buried like the others by being lowered over the side of the ship into the sea. Frau Hutzler was consoled by Frau von Thurn who lost two sons, aged two and five.

The arrival in New York was not as impressive in January as it would have been later in the year when it was filled with ships from all nations. The city itself was imposing enough for those times having over 500,000 inhabitants, all of whom seemed to be in motion at the same time. It seems that every visitor from abroad commented on this feverish activity of the Americans. It is said that the rocking chair was invented by the Americans so that they could keep moving even though sitting in one place.

The Hutzlers did not remain long in New York. They proceeded by means of the Buffalo & New York City Railroad to Buffalo. Had they arrived in summer, they might have gone to Buffalo by way of the Erie Canal. At this time of year the Canal was frozen over. They thereby saved themselves an arduous journey. Accounts relate that swarms of mosquitoes attacked the passengers on the canal boats. Prized possessions were given up regularly in order to have enough money to purchase food enroute. Harriet Martineau who had visited the island earlier made part of the trip over the Canal and found it disagreeable. The speed limit was four miles per hour, the crowd lay "packed like herrings in a barrel," and there was a constant bumping against the sides of the locks with the usual hissing of water at each lock. Nevertheless it was an improvement on the stage coaches that got stuck in the mud or frequently overturned on the perilous roads. However, cholera and small pox also rode the canal.

If the Hutzlers escaped cholera by not using the Erie Canal, they became its victims once they arrived in Buffalo. This dreadful disease was to the 19th century what the black plague was to an earlier period and what polio and a variety of other diseases were to the 20th. From forty to sixty percent of all cases in those days were fatal. The disease attacked its victims through acute diarrhea and vomiting, followed by agonizing cramps throughout the body. Extreme exhaustion was accompanied by falling blood pressure and a weakened pulse. Within a week the victims usually died. The disease decimated whole cities. In New Orleans the people built huge bonfires in the intersections of streets to move the air and cause the disease to disappear. Even cannons were fired in an attempt to dispel the deadly vapors.

During the summer of 1854, while they were still in Buffalo, most of the Hutzlers came down with cholera. Margaretha, who was again expecting, feared for the life of

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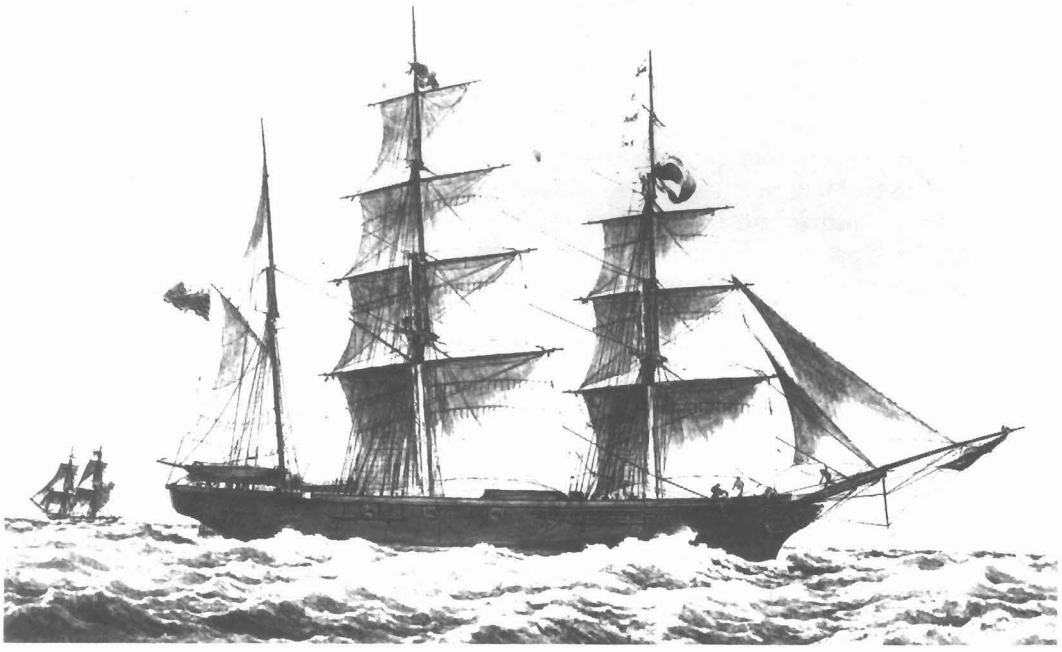
View of New York in 1850, several years before the Hutzlers arrived.



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This ship is a bark or barque, having approximately the same dimensions as the *Sir Isaac Newton.* Note that it has two rather than three masts and only fore-and-aft sails on the mizzen mast.

her unborn child and fought the disease valiantly. So did her husband. Having been taken to a hospital, such as they were in those days, George Hutzler lay in bed only half conscious. At one point he heard the attendants say that he would probably be taken away the next day, just as they were doing to the man who died in the bed next to him. It was at this moment, so George later maintained, that he made up his mind to fight the disease with all his strength. He would not leave his family alone in a new and strange world without the protection only he could give. And somehow the crisis passed. He was exhausted but alive. Little by little his strength returned and he was able to rejoin his family. But once more he lost a son. Young Georg with the laughing eyes and merry voice was gone. He would never see the Indians he had talked so much about. Little Anna, his sister, asked her mother why she was crying. Margaretha only wiped her eyes and pointed to the two men who were measuring the boy as he lay motionless in bed.

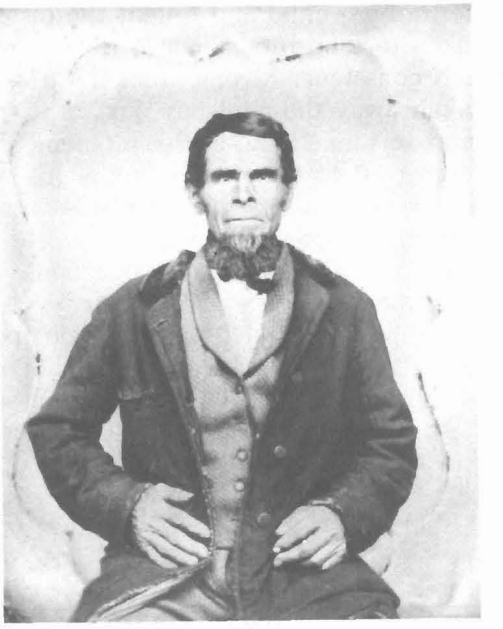
It was a terrible loss for George and Margaretha — another payment that was exacted of them for trying to realize a better future for themselves and their children. Young Georg had been a bright lad who could already read and write. Within a few years he would have been a great help to his father in establishing a farm somewhere in the West. But there were still the girls who worked and comforted their parents in this adverse time. The family slowly regained its strength, taking some consolation in the old German adage: "Work and don't despair!"

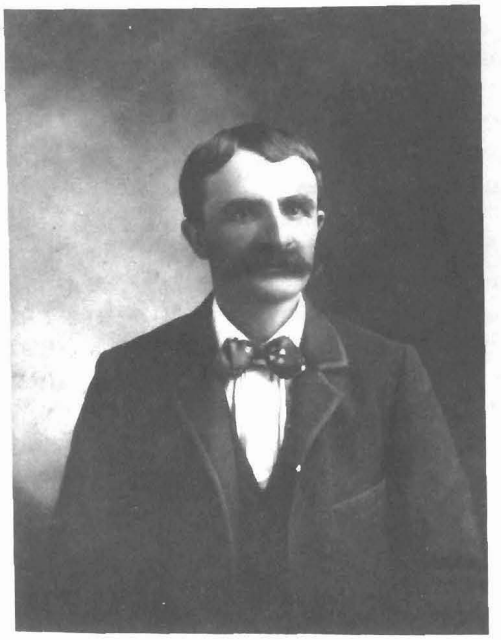
In January of the following year, 1855, Margaretha bore another son, whom she also named George. Although this may seem an odd custom, it apparently happened with some frequency in the 1800's. Were parents comforted by thinking that the spirit of the lost child somehow entered into the body of the new child, or did they hope thereby to keep alive the memory of the deceased?

As the winter of 1854-55 changed into spring, George Hutzler found fresh cause to find a permanent settlement for his family. As soon as sailing opened on the Lakes, he took a job on the steamer *Iowa.* She was a new side-wheeler of over 1000 gross tons, having been built in Buffalo only three years earlier. By working on the *Iowa*, George was able to get first-hand impressions of the country to the west. The ship sailed through Lake Erie, Lake Huron, and Lake Michigan, making regular runs between Buffalo and Chicago. George liked Lake Michigan best of all. He was not impressed with Chicago as a place to settle with his family. Whereas many immigrants were drawn to the growing city, George found it unattractive. It seemed to him to be located in a swamp and therefore probably unhealthful. The family's recent struggle with the cholera was still fresh in his mind. In 1850 the portrait artist G.P.A. Healy wrote of Chicago:

> "the streets are abominably paved; the sidewalks raised high above the level of the streets. . .and the mud so deep in bad weather that one has to use rickety boards as unsafe bridges to cross them."

On one of the trips to Chicago, the *Iowa* stopped at South Manitou to take on wood. George was impressed with the beauty of the island and the surrounding country. He also thought that the island might have a good future. It seemed to him that he would be able to sell to the visiting boats almost anything he could grow. He soon learned that the owner of the wharf, a Mr. Burton, was in need of men to cut wood. George applied for work and was accepted. He worked hard, and a strong friendship developed between him and his employer. When a fire broke out on the





(Upper left) George Hutzler Jr., born in Buffalo, the eldest son, was the mainstay of the family. His son Ernest became Keeper of South Manitou Light. Photograph circa 1878.
(Upper right) A daguerreotype of George Hutzler made in Traverse City after he had walked there from Glen Haven to apply or pay for an additional grant of land. circa 1863.
(Lower left) John Hutzler maintained the Hutzler homestead until his death in 1944. Picture taken in Chicago circa 1895.
(Lower right) Louis Hutzler, the youngest son, frequently referred to as "the Yankee" because of his height and ability to ride horseback. Photograph by Hartley Studios, Chicago, circa 1887.

(Upper left) Anna Hutzler, seated, daughter of George and Margaretha Hutzler, and Frances Burton, daughter of Ellison and Anna Burton. circa 1875
(Upper right) Katherine Hutzler, born on the island in 1860, later became the wife of Leonard Rohr of Empire. circa 1880.
(Lower left) Margaret and Elizabeth Hutzler, the two eldest daughters. Margaret later became Mrs. George Aylsworth of Empire, and Elizabeth, Mrs. John Hoeft of Leland. circa 1864.
(Lower right) Louisa Hutzler, the last of the Hutzler children, born on South Manitou in 1868. Photograph circa 1889.

island and destroyed the wood he had cut to pay for his family's passage, Mr. Burton came to his aid. He extended credit to him so that he could return to Buffalo and bring Margaretha and the children to the island. Over a year had elapsed since George had started working for Mr. Burton. During that time he had lost touch with his family. It is quite likely that the Hutzler family celebrated their reunion and their first Christmas on the island in a log cabin in 1856. For sure, a small spruce tree decorated with cookies and apples was part of the Christmas celebration.

And each Christmas was cause for new rejoicing. The family worked hard. Much was accomplished. Whatever was not needed to feed themselves was taken to the harbor. The Homestead Act was hardly issued before George set off for Traverse City to claim the land he had staked out. Once he reached the mainland, he walked the entire distance, some thirty miles, returning as well on foot. He had already made this trip before, laying claim to two pieces of land each containing eighty acres.

But land was not enough. A barn had to be built, for George Hutzler had already begun to breed livestock—both horses and cows. Percherons were imported from as far away as Illinois. The barn raising took place in 1865 and was supervised by John Hoeft of Leland. It was an immense structure of varying levels put together without nails. The giant timbers were secured with wooden pegs.

But George not only got the barn, he got a son-in-law as well. John Hoeft shortly afterward married the eldest of the Hutzler girls, Elizabeth. About the same time he gave the hand of his second daughter Margaret to George Aylsworth, a lumberman, then resident on North Manitou. Mr. Alysworth admired Margaret not only for her beauty but for her ability to ride sidesaddle. This she had learned on the Hutzler farm. According to the state census of 1870, George Hutzler had six horses, in addition to thirty head of cattle.

Looking back it seems amazing what George Hutzler managed to accomplish almost single-handed during the period of less than fifteen years, from 1856 to 1870. Arriving at the island at the age of forty-two with almost no money, he was able by hard work, thrift, and careful planning to establish himself as the most successful farmer on the island. It is likely that aside from his own efforts, he was able to draw on the help of his friends whom he had encouraged to settle there too. From 1870 on, his son George gave him much of the support he lacked earlier.

In addition to livestock, George Hutzler set out an orchard of apple and cherry trees. It was his delight to walk among the trees in the springtime when they were in bloom. He loved flowers and enjoyed their fragrance. His favorite flower was the carnation, which he grew near the house. On occasion he would pick one, smell it and wedge its red blossom behind his ear against his shiny black hair. There it remained while he plowed in the fields behind his oxen or worked nearby.

As industrious as George Hutzler was, neither he nor his family worked on Sunday. To be sure certain tasks had to be done, but in large part the day was set aside as something special. Margaretha put on her best black dress with its long sleeves and high collar and read from the Bible. Either visitors came to the farm, or the Hutzlers in turn visited their neighbors.

In 1873 George Hutzler was chosen as one of the three inspectors to supervise the elections for South Manitou Township. No doubt this selection came in recognition for what he had achieved and his standing in the island community.

The year 1880 found the Hutzler farm still in the lead among the twelve families of farmers on the island. By the time George Hutzler reached the age of seventy, in

The Hutzler barn as it appeared in the 1930's before it was struck by lightning and burned to the ground.

Margaretha Hutzler, at eighty-seven years of age, seated near the rear of the old Hutzler home. At least three other buildings made up the complex of the Hutzler homestead. Photograph taken in the summer of 1907.

1884, he could look upon three stalwart sons to be his heirs. Indeed they must have given comfort to him, and well he needed that comfort. He had undoubtedly grown old ahead of time, but he was satisfied with what he had accomplished.

When he was asked whether he would ever like to return to Bavaria, he replied: "No. . .but I would like my friends in the Old Country to see how good I have it here." Four years later he died and was buried as he had wished, in the middle of his orchard. A simple stone marks the spot. On it are inscribed his name, the dates of his birth and death, and the word—Father. It might well read: "Here lies a Michigan Pioneer—the first Homesteader on South Manitou." George Hutzler was a man who believed in and realized the American Dream.

Margaretha Hutzler survied her husband for more than twenty years, being almost ninety years of age at the time of her death. In addition to sharing her husband's hopes and aspirations, she gave him eleven children, five of whom were born on the island. She remained on the island until the last years of her life. These she spent with her daughters in Chicago. She died there, February 26, 1909, upon learning of the sudden death of her eldest son.

[No. 340.]

AN ACT to organize the township of South Manitou, in the county of Manitou.

SECTION 1. *The People of the State of Michigan enact*, That the island of South Manitou, in Lake Michigan, embraced within the limits of the county of Manitou, being townships thirty and thirty-one north, of range fifteen west, be and the same is hereby organized into a township by the name of South Manitou; and the first township meeting therein shall be held at the house of James H. Starkweather, in said township; and James H. Starkweather, Hiram D. Willmarth, and George Hutzler are hereby authorized to act as inspectors of the final [first] election to elect township officers; which election shall be held on the first Monday in April, eighteen hundred and seventy-three, and conducted according to the statutes in such cases made and provided.

Township organized.

First election.

Inspectors of same.

SEC. 2. If for any reason the township meeting should not be held at the time named, it shall be lawful to hold the same on any day thereafter, by giving at least ten days' notice of the time and place of holding such meeting, by posting notices thereof in four of the most public places in said township, which the said board of inspectors are hereby authorized and required to do.

Of failure to hold election at specified time.

[SEC. 3. This act shall take immediate effect.]

Approved March 28, 1873.

[No. 341.]

AN ACT to detach certain territory from the township of Merritt and Hampton, and attach the same to the township of Portsmouth, in Bay county.

SECTION 1. *The People of the State of Michigan enact*, That all that portion of the township of Merritt in the county of Bay which lies in township thirteen north, of range five east,

Territory detached from Merritt and Hampton and attached to Portsmouth.

An act of the Michigan legislature establishing the township of South Manitou. Neither the census of 1870 nor the census of 1880 lists anyone on the island by the name of Starkweather or Willmarth. The outcome of the election, if held, is not known.

The Island's Settlers

"We primeval forests felling,
We the surface broad surveying
We the virgin soil upheaving
Pioneers! O pioneers!"

If George Hutzler was the first homesteader on South Manitou, William N. Burton and family were certainly the first settlers. The earliest record of title to a tract of land on South Manitou appears to be fifty acres to W.N. Burton in 1849. There is no doubt, however, that Burton, arrived at the island with his family long before that, possibly around 1835. It should be noted that in 1838 Lt. Homans already reported a house and a steamboat landing on the island. These undoubtedly belonged to Burton. It is quite likely that he had been cutting wood on the island without title to the land. At this early date such a thing seems to have been common practice. Leach in his *History of the Grand Traverse Region* states:

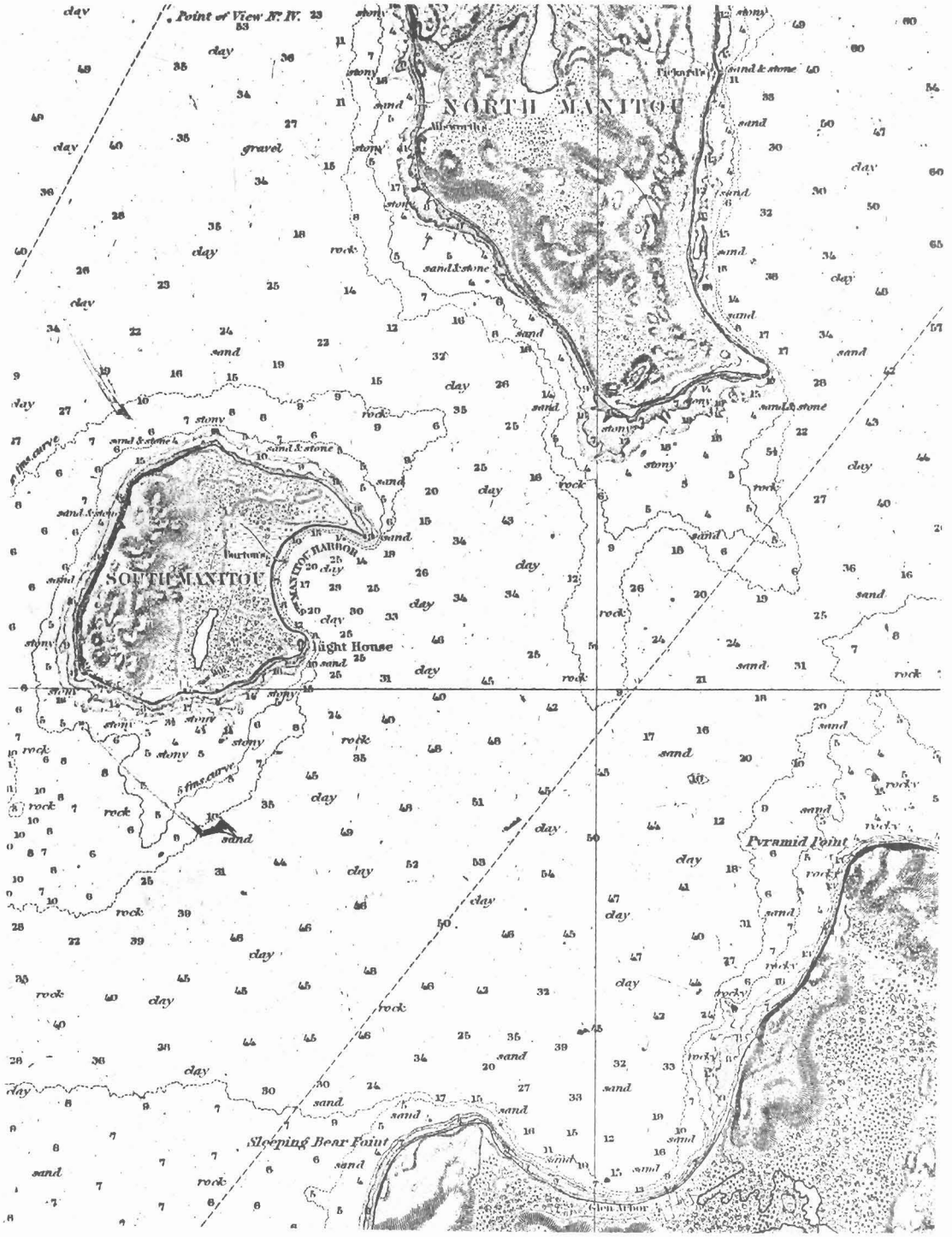
> "The bark was stripped from trees growing on Government land. There was no one in this remote region who considered it his duty to prevent spoilation of public property."

It is said that Burton at one time laid claim to the entire island, but this claim was never honored.

If the exact date of Burton's arrival on the island is uncertain, it is known that he was selected among the islanders in 1840 to become the first lighthouse keeper. It is also known that he and his son Ellison played a big part in developing the island as a fueling station. At one time the Burtons had a saw mill on the south end of the island.

The first settlement in what is now known as Leelanau County was on South Manitou Island. The survey of Orange Risdon, who was commissioned by the Surveyor General in 1847 to survey the island, is quite informative. Risdon mentions Burton's pier along with a grocery store, a barn, a house, a blacksmith's shop, other buildings, and a wooden tamarack railroad track about three or four miles in length over which wood was hauled for the steamboats. A map made by the Surveyor General's Office in Detroit in 1850 refers to the pier as "Burton's wharf." It was the only one in the immediate region to be designated with the name of a person. Located in the center of the harbor, the wharf later came to be known as "the old dock," distinguishing it from a "new dock" close to Sandy Point.

Mr. Burton, who should not be confused with W. W. Barton, an early resident of Leland, was a Yankee from Vermont come west by way of Ohio to make his fortune like so many others from the New England states. He was not only enterprising and ambitious but generous. One example of this was his extension of credit to George Hutzler already recounted. A similar act of kindness by Mr. Burton was his invitation to Martin Knudsen, the lighthouse keeper, to use his house during the winter months. The keeper and his family would thereby escape the monotony of life at Sandy Point. In later years Mr. Burton kept a store at the dock from which he sold staples not produced locally. In most respects the island was self-sufficient, providing its own meat and vegetables.



Section of Map showing Manitou Passage — U.S. Corps of Engineers 1863.
Note absence of harbor or lighthouse on North Manitou.

A less generous streak on the part of Mr. Burton was his substituting the name of George Haas for his own on a draft notice he received. Whether this was done arbitrarily and Haas accepted it as coming from a friend and benefactor, or whether he accepted money for this purpose from Burton, as was frequently done during the Civil War period, is not known. In any event, it is reported that Haas left his wife with six children and went off to join the Union forces. For three years nothing was heard of him until he suddenly returned to take up once more cultivation of the homestead he had left in the care of his family.

Interestingly enough, by 1900 the Burtons no longer owned land on the island. Sometime before the end of the century, they sold their holdings and left for California. The several families of Hutzlers, on the other hand, owned almost one fifth of the entire island. The proportion of cultivated land possessed by the Hutzlers was much higher. The Beck and Haas families ranked second and third in the amount of land owned.

Putnam Burdick and his wife Melissa from Baden followed the Burtons as the second oldest family among the early settlers. Their farm was adjacent to that of the Hutzlers. Putnam Burdick had evidently served in the army, since some of his land was awarded for military service. James Burdick, a grandson of Putnam Burdick, became Keeper of South Manitou Lighthouse at a much later date. The Burdick family is associated with the island even to the present day. Fred Burdick and his wife Bea of Lansing are active in promoting the island, not as a haven for boats, as it used to be, but as a refuge for those weary of urban life and the complexities and disillusionments of the modern world.

Also neighbors of the Hutzlers were George and Maria Haas from Bavaria, who settled on the island about 1860. The Hutzlers and the Haases had become good friends in Buffalo, and once George Hutzler was established on the island, he encouraged the Haases to settle there too. At a much later date, one of the Haas girls married a Hutzler, helping to unite the two families.

The Becks also arrived in the 1860's from Germany. Along with the Hutzlers and Haases, they contributed toward making the island a thriving agricultural community. Theodore Beck, at the age of nineteen, came to the island from Braunschweig with his brother August, who later married into the Haas family.

The census of 1860, recorded by Philo Beers on the 28th day of July, lists 17 dwellings on South Manitou with a total of 73 persons resident there. Of these 41 were male and 32 female. One dwelling listed five men as occupants, probably woodcutters, three of them being men in their early twenties recently arrived from Holland. Almost half the men in the census are listed as day laborers, the remainder as farmers.

The accuracy of this census is open to question. Philo Beers was Keeper of the Lighthouse at Northport and was later elected to the State Legislature. It would appear from the census that he was a better speaker than he was a speller. He could be excused for being unable to spell the name Hutzler when pronounced with a strong German accent, but he should have been able to spell Burdick. The Hutzler family is recorded as "Hoolster," while the Burdicks appear as "Burdie." Unfortunately there are discrepancies in the given names and the ages of various family members. The "Hoolsters" are identified as coming from "Bavaray!" The whole exercise must have been very trying or Mr. Beers was treated to plenty of hard cider. When he finished his census, Beers wrote in an extremely legible hand the single word "concludede."

Many of the names listed in the 1860 census do not appear in the census of 1870. These were mostly the names of day laborers. Probably the majority of them were lumberjacks who had moved on to locations of greater opportunity on the mainland where trees at this time began to fall in great numbers. By 1870 the island community was composed of a number of families whose futures were tied to the rise or decline of the island as an economic unit. Of the fourteen families listed in 1870, six were from Germany, three from the State of New York, one from Vermont, two from England, and one from Ireland. Starting with the two Hutzler and two Beck families, there follow: Haas, Price, Burdick, Burton, Armstrong, Abbot, Smith, Evans, Kitchen, and Sheridan. All of these names also appear in the census of 1880.

By 1880 the island seems to have reached the peak of its population. According to the census of that year, there were ninety-eight residents on the island. Twenty families or heads of households are listed with kith and kin. Most of the residents were farmers. The exceptions were E.E. Burton, wood merchant, four fishermen, and Oswald Fuerst from Baden, a bookbinder by trade. The Erickson family apparently arrived shortly after the census was taken. Assuming that there had been no departures in the meantime, the population would then have exceeded 100.

The census of 1880 reveals that marriageable girls on the island were in short supply. For twelve single men, there were at that time only three girls in a similar status. The result was that some men took wives considerably younger than themselves. The wife of Joseph Haas was fourteen when she got married. He was twenty-four. Whether this disparity in age caused the elder Mrs. Haas to look down upon her daughter-in-law or whether a personality conflict came about quite naturally is difficult to say. Mrs. Haas was about fifty-two years of age and, in German fashion, might have expected some sort of dowry for her daughter-in-law at the time of the marriage. The family of Florence Raimau was not in a position to provide such a dowry. In any event the harmony in the Haas family was upset for some time to come. In spite of the fact that Florence Haas proved to be an excellent and energetic wife and mother, she was never accepted by the Haases, and Joseph Haas lived to see his father's estate divided among his brothers, while he received a dollar in due course. The fact that old Mr. Haas liked his daughter-in-law did not lessen the effect of the will.

Another youthful marriage was that of August and Elizabeth Beck. Elizabeth Beck, nee Haas, was sixteen. Her husband was just three years older. At twenty-four Mrs. Beck was already the mother of four children.

In some instances, the shortage of marriageable girls led men to marry women older than themselves or those who had already been married but whose husbands had met an early death. In this way, the inter-marriage of families on the island became complex to the point that only a person with a strong interest in genealogy could hope to explain the maze of relationships among the islanders.

One family that joined the island community just before the census of 1870 was that of the 24-year-old farmer, Cleland Abbot from New York. Abbot lived on a small piece of land on the northwest corner of the island. He appeared to be a gentleman, and he and his small family were well liked. However, there were some who believed he made counterfeit money and had settled in this remote spot to evade police in the East. Every fall he left the island and returned later bringing back large stores of provisions. One fall day he left the island and never returned. His counterfeiting machine is believed to be buried under a stump near the place where

Joseph Haas, son of George and Maria Haas, neighbors of the Hutzlers, and his wife Florence, nee Raimau. The photograph, if actually a wedding picture, would have been taken in 1877 at which time Florence was fourteen years of age.

Thomas Kitchen, later a Keeper of South Manitou Light, with his fiancee, Anna Hoeft, a granddaughter of George Hutzler, circa 1892 shortly before Kitchen's death.

the Abbot house once stood. The fact that the census of 1880 lists Abbot as the only head of a family having "no occupation" seems to indicate that the suspicions of the islanders may have been correct.

Stories of counterfeiting on the island have a hard way of dying. As late as 1948, Mr. Lee Barrett, in company with several others from Detroit, purchased the 250-acre Beck farm on the south side of the island. Barrett reported that a ring of counterfeiters had once used the farmhouse for its headquarters. These stories along with others, such as those told by John Lambkin of Empire, albeit with a twinkle in his eye, about pirates who deliberately caused shipwrecks, give a rather sinister tone to activity on the island. They almost fit in with the Indian legends about the islands being inhabited by evil spirits.

In addition to the George Johann Hutzler family, a second family of Hutzlers also resided on the island and helped to establish later its unique place in the agricultural development of the Midwest. George Conrad Hutzler was George Hutzler's half-brother and had come to the island at his suggestion. It is said that George Hutzler entered a claim for his half-brother for a homestead before he arrived. Even after he arrived, however, George Conrad was forced to work for a short time as a fireman on a Lake Michigan steamboat until he could establish himself.

In 1872 a son was born to George Conrad whom he also named George. Little did he realize at the time that through his son's and grandson's efforts, the Island would become internationally famous in agricultural circles as a producer of prize Rosen rye. According to newspaper articles in 1946, the seed-growing practices of the Hutzlers were so superior that they were able to carry away scores of first prizes at international, national, and state seed and crop shows. In 1920 their hand-picked sample of rye won first prize at the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago. A few years later the Hutzler farm began to produce prize beans and then in the 1930's the famous Michelite variety of pea beans. In the 1940's, the State of Michigan produced annually up to six million 100-pound bags of beans, 80 percent of them and of all the other pea beans grown in the United States were only two generations removed from the parent stock on South Manitou.

As peaceful as South Manitou Island appears, its harbor was not always the scene of ships at anchor, with sunsets or sunrises, or lazy fishermen fixing their nets while seagulls floated by. Sometimes it was the scene of real tragedy.

On several occasions, sailors who had been stricken on their boats and had died were brought ashore to be buried in a small cemetery near the dock. For them the island was a last resting place. The oldest tombstone on the island bears a date of 1849, and marks the grave of a young man who met an untimely end. The same burial place contains the grave of a member of the Sheridan family. One grave bearing no marking is still designated by an old but well-preserved picket fence.

Perhaps the earliest tragedy for the island residents involved the death of Thomas Kitchen, on January 25, 1864. Thomas Kitchen and his brother Richard had emigrated together from England and had taken up farming on the island in the 1850's. They were well liked as were the various members of their families. Unfortunately, Thomas attempted to cross on the ice to the mainland, as was often done by the islanders. Only this time there was a sudden thaw and somewhere between the island and the mainland Thomas, only thirty-eight years of age and the father of three children, disappeared without a trace. His youngest son, also named Thomas, grew to manhood and became one of the keepers of South Manitou Light.

Guardians *From Lonely Manitou Island Come Nation's Blueblood Seeds*

The lonely isolation of a Lake Michigan island provides protection for the parent seed stock of one of Michigan's most important crops, the pea bean.

For several years pure strains of seed of the leading pea bean variety, the Michigan State college developed Michelite, has been grown on South Manitou island, located several miles off the shore, near Leland.

On the sparsely settled bit of land, only a few square miles in area, a 75-year-old farmer, George Hutzler, and his son, Louis, have for several years carefully guarded precious certified bean and Rosen rye plantings.

• • •

This has been their profession since 1919, when representatives of the college and the Michigan Crop Improve association encouraged the elder Hutzler to plant selected seed of Rosen rye on the island. This in turn led to the planting of beans in 1923.

Fourteen years later the famed Michelite bean got its start on South Manitou island. Dr. E. E. Down, Michigan State college plant breeder, had successfully developed the new variety after years of crossing and selection. Under his supervision a release of purified seed was planted on the island for the first increase.

• • •

Now it is estimated that at least 80 percent of all pea beans grown in the United States are of the improved Michelite variety. Its high quality and good yielding assets put it head and shoulders above any other variety grown in pea bean areas. Only a small percentage of Michelite beans now raised are more than two generations removed from the parent stock of South Manitou island, seed experts point out. Michigan itself grows up to six million 100-pound bags of beans each year, most of them Michelite. Other states are raising smaller quantities of the beans.

Although the first seed project on South Manitou was the growing of Rosen rye, bean seed production is of far more importance, both to farmers and the consuming public.

• • •

When an American housewife prepares a pot of navy or pea beans for the dinner table, she can reflect that the chances are about eight to 10 that those beans had their origin on the Lake Michigan island. As one of the basic items of food for our service men, millions of bags of beans were shipped to the battle front from farm marketing points during the war.

George Hutzler, who has stood guard to maintain purity at the headwaters of the nation's bean supply, is a typical descendant of the pioneer families which settled the Great Lakes region. He was was born in a log cabin on South Manitou island in 1872. His father, Conrad Hutzler, was a fireman on a Lake Michigan steamboat. Carrying on the family tradition of growing highest quality registered seed, Louis, the son, is now doing most of the active farming, with the help of his wife, a Chicago girl whom he married 11 years ago. For 23 years, following the death of Mrs. George Hutzler, father and son "batched" on the secluded farm.

[illegible] their hand-picked sample of rye won first prize at the International Livestock exposition at Chicago. From then until 1927 the Hutzlers missed getting first prize at this show only twice.

A strict routine is followed in planting both rye and beans.

Michigan State college crops specialists assist in making seed selections for each year's crop. Seed that remains is carefully cleaned and inspected, and then because of its high purity is registered and sold to certified seed growers, who supply the nation's bean farmers with adequate supplies of certified bean seed. The beans are carefully hand-picked each season. During the winter months, the Hutzlers spend the equivalent of six weeks around the bean table, picking out and discarding all immature or malformed seed.

The need for maintaining the purity of the valued Rosen rye seed was recognized by Michigan crop improvement and college officials a quarter of a century ago. The best solution to the problem of crossing with other varieties seemed to be complete isolation of the seed growth. South Manitou island, only four miles long and two and one half miles wide, appeared to be the answer. College specialists called a historic meeting of farmers living on the island to launch the project in 1919. Opportunities in growing parent seed of the Rosen variety were pointed out to the dozen or so gathered. It was agreed that all common rye must be eliminated from the island if the project were to succeed. Most of the farmers were interested.

From a small beginning of 30 pounds of seed that planted a single acre, several farms were able to adhere to the requirements necessary to grow registered seed. Only the Hutzlers stuck by the trade.

Back in 1919 there were 10 or a dozen farms on the island. Now there are only three. Difficulties of transportation of farm products to the mainland, and the lonely existence, have caused abandonment of the farms.

The problem of maintaining bean seed purity began in 1923 with the development of the Robust variety of bean. The Hutzlers then agreed to expand their seed project to include the bean. Then in 1937 the Robust bean was sidetracked for the new improved variety, the Michelite, with Robust being eliminated from the island.

Bean and rye seed production work is being supervised at present by Stuart Hildebrand and H. M. Brown, farm crops specialists of Michigan State college.

quire a comprehensive community approach."

Some of the 19 problems considered by the report are: need for a suitable agricultural policy, inflation in farm land prices, need for greater foreign trade, inadequate rural health service and hospital facilities, development of rural industries, problems of rural-urban fringe communities, and farm tenancy.

The state land use committee in a meeting at Higgins lake on Monday and Tuesday will be asked to review its recommendations made in this study in the light of recent steps taken by the state planning commission and to suggest procedures for attaining the objectives outlined in the report. Special consideration will be devoted to the commission's current proposals on water control problems and the recent report of the state hospital survey committee.

Clipping from the *State Journal*, Lansing, September 29, 1946.

Picture: George Hutzler, son of George Conrad, mowing Rosen rye.

The fate of the Sheridan family in 1878 was the most tragic of all. That story is related in a following chapter.

A somewhat similar accident befell Thomas Thompson, who was a latecomer to the island. An entry in the logbook of the Life-Saving Service describes the accident as it occurred on June 10, 1910. The full account may be read in the addendum entitled "Additional Logbook Entries."

The same logbook only two years later contains a brief account of the accidental death by drowning of Joseph Haas on July 12, 1912. Bereft of her husband, Florence Haas took over the responsibility for carrying the mail between Glen Haven and the island. Only a year before she had received a pilot's license — allegedly the first woman on the Great Lakes to be given official permission to operate a motor launch.

Quite different was the fate that befell Andrew Burdick. His departure for service in the army in World War I was witnessed by many islanders who came to the dock to cheer him on his way. Certainly his friends in the Life-Saving Station, where he appeared as a frequent substitute for surfmen temporarily absent or on leave, would miss him. He was gone less than two years. His body was returned to the island from Archangel, Russia, where according to his regimental chaplain, he died of pneumonia shortly before the signing of the Armistice.

But we should not leave this chapter on so sad a note. The Island was fundamentally a happy place. It had many young people and as in most pioneer communities, both young and old and those in between took part in almost all social events. Barn raisings and barn dances were sure to bring the settlers and their families together. Harvesting with Thanksgiving was more meaningful to the islanders than it is to city folk today. Since the first snowfalls frequently came with Thanksgiving and the ground remained white until spring, sleighs with bells carried the islanders from one end of South Manitou to the other and sometimes all the way to Glen Arbor on the mainland.

Engagements, betrothals, and christenings were sure to cause excitement throughout the community and coincided with the visit of a minister, since there was no resident minister on the island. Revival meetings were discussed before and afterwards, supplementing regular reading of the Bible. No doubt fingers of warning were raised at those young men who were known to be too fond of hard cider. Such meetings were also attended by crews from ships that lay in the harbor.

The visit of a new steamer or a noteworthy sailing vessel was also cause to congregate at the harbor. There the children ran about while young people exchanged glances or remarks and the elders commented on the dimensions of the ship or the happenings of the day. Frequently the ship also had on it a travelling salesman who delighted the ladies with his cases of buttons, needles, silks, and laces. Many a new gown got started with such a visit.

At a later date, with the coming of the Coast Guard, baseball teams were organized and contests took place between the team on South Manitou and the one at Sleeping Bear. There was general celebrating on the island when its own team won.

Of frequent concern were storms and wrecks. The islanders were hospitable and helpful to those in need. Many of them performed heroic deeds which in later times would have been given special recognition. The logbook of the Life-Saving Station records many of the wrecks. A few of them are included in a chapter that follows.

From Trading Post to Summer Resort

"Through the channel between South Manitou and the mainland, the principal commerce of the Lake passes."

It is only natural that South Manitou Island should have become the first place of settlement and commerce in the region. It was strategically located being the first island with a navigable harbor to be reached in the long haul northward from Chicago or Milwaukee to Buffalo, and it was the last point of easy access on trips south. Its harbor was an invitation to passing boats. Most of the harbors on the Great Lakes, at that time at least, were shallow. When a settlement was made, either on the Michigan or the Wisconsin side of the lake, it was usually located at the mouth of one of the short rivers that drained into the lake. The rivers as they flowed into the lake gradually built up sandbars that prevented larger craft from entering them.

John Lerue has been credited with being the first settler in Leelanau County. Actually he was not. It has already been pointed out that William N. Burton preceded him. At the time that Lerue was named as the first settler, South Manitou Island was not part of Leelanau County. South Manitou earlier belonged to Manitou County which was dissolved in 1894. Established in 1855, Manitou County included the Manitou, Fox, and Beaver islands. At the time Lerue settled on the mainland, neither Manitou nor Leelanau counties existed. Both were part of a much greater area known as Michilimackinac County, quite distinctly shown on the 1835 map of Michigan.

What apparently gave rise to the present-day misconception regarding the first settler in the county was W.L. Leach's excellent *History of the Grand Traverse Region,* published in 1883. At that date, South Manitou Island was not yet a part of Leelanau County. Hence Leach in naming Lerue as the first settler of Leelanau County quite naturally did not include settlers on South Manitou.

When Lerue arrived in the area, that is, in 1846, he stopped first at the island. At that time South Manitou already had a lighthouse, a dock, and was a regular port of call for steamers going up and down the lake. Indians paddled to the island to trade with the white men there. Lerue moved from the island to the mainland near Sleeping Bear in 1848 in order to carry on his trade with the Indians more directly and with greater advantage.

Another explanation for the current assumption that Lerue was the earliest settler in Leelanau County is that he is so listed in the *Atlas of Leelanau County*, compiled and published by C.O. Titus in 1881. Once again we find that the atlas did not include the residents on South Manitou.

Even the first settlers at Traverse City had to look to South Manitou for connections with the outside world. At that date no steamers or even commercial sailing vessels would venture into Grand Traverse Bay because vesselmasters considered it to be an uncharted inland sea. The first settlers at Grand Traverse City found considerable difficulty in getting to and from the settlement. Captain Boardman, who decided to locate there, used a craft of only a few tons draught called the *Lady of*

the Lake, originally a small yacht. This was used to make trips to and from South Manitou to pick up people and supplies:

> "After assisting for a few days in the building of the house, Gay was dispatched with a little vessel to the Manitou Islands to bring in a party of employees, who it had been arranged should come as far as the islands by steamer . . . There came with him, Mr. Gay's young wife, then only about 14 or 16 years old, and her four-month-old baby, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan, a hired girl, and several carpenters."

On the 10th of October 1847, with the mill completed, Captain Boardman set out again for the island to return the employees and pick up supplies. He reached the island, but unfortunately the supplies had not yet arrived. While waiting for them, the vessel was wrecked in a storm. When the supplies arrived, he could find no one to take them into Grand Traverse Bay. Since he could do nothing further on the island, he took passage on a steamer to Mackinac Island. There he crossed to the mainland and then started out on foot some one-hundred miles along the beach back to what later became Traverse City. Most of the way, there was no footpath nor any civilized dwelling. Only at two small missions among the Indians was he able to get a night's shelter and food.

In contrast to the activity on South Manitou Island, the mainland up to 1850 was wilderness. But it was a kind of wilderness which would appeal to the reader of today. M.L. Leach describes it in the following words:

> "There was no underbrush nor herbage — only a brown carpet of dead pine leaves upon the ground. So open and parklike was the forest that one could ride through it in all directions on horseback at a rapid pace . . . . Clear streams and swift currents flowed through an open forest of pines."

Undoubtedly it was a forest such as this which originally covered South Manitou Island. But the needs of the visiting woodburning steamers and Mr. Burton's mill cut heavily into the original stand of timber. What remained of it, except for a small plot, disappeared after F.E. Fisher and B.J. Morgan set up a mill in 1905. The mill employed over fifty loggers.

While South Manitou Island enjoyed easy access to the outside world, Traverse City was still struggling to establish regular connections. In 1854 mail reached Traverse City once a week from Manistee. It was carried by an Indian called "Old Joe" over a trail marked by blazed trees. As time went on it was carried by horseback in summer. In winter it was drawn over the snow on a kind of sled.

Rapid settlement of the mainland did not take place until the passage of the Homestead Act took effect in 1863 whereby settlers could lay claim to parcels of land amounting to 80 or 160 acres. The opening up of land in Michigan in 1874 formerly designated as Indian reservations, also hastened settlement in the area. In 1868 a dock was built at Glen Arbor which facilitated communication and trading between the mainland and the Island. The big horses raised on the Hutzler farm were eagerly sought on the mainland for use in lumbering operations.

The year 1871 and the great Chicago fire gave additional importance to the island. The city of Chicago was almost totally destroyed. Rebuilding it with more permanent structures required millions of tons of sand and gravel. South Manitou had given most of its wood to serve transportation and commerce on the Lakes. Now it was called upon to help in rebuilding a city that lay in ashes. Following the

great fire, the Garden City Sand Company of Chicago bought up whatever island property it could get that had water frontage. Thereafter a steady procession of boats and barges headed toward the island. Once loaded they turned south again to the stricken city, eagerly awaited by those in charge of construction.

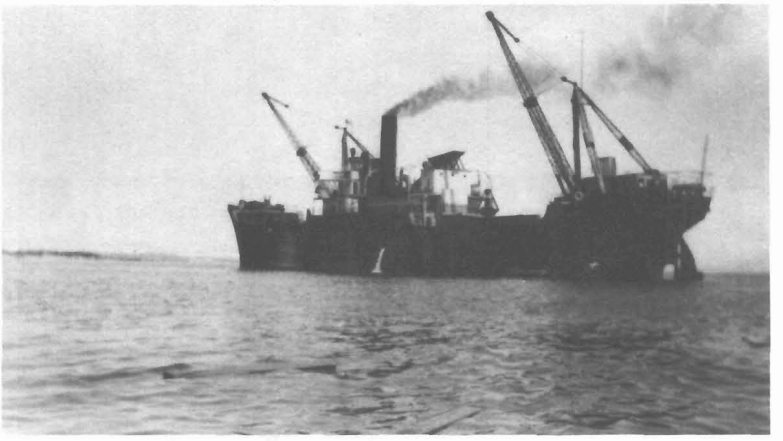
It was during the decade from 1870 to 1880 that the island seems to have reached the height of its development. At this time the lighthouse with a new tower was transformed into one of the most important on the lakes. The island itself was incorporated as a township in 1873. And a post office was authorized to care for the needs of its residents and many visitors. The South Manitou Post Office was opened on September 2, 1879, with Richard Kitchen as its first postmaster. It continued in operation for over sixty years being closed as late as May 31, 1943. A list of postmasters and postmistresses is included in an addendum.

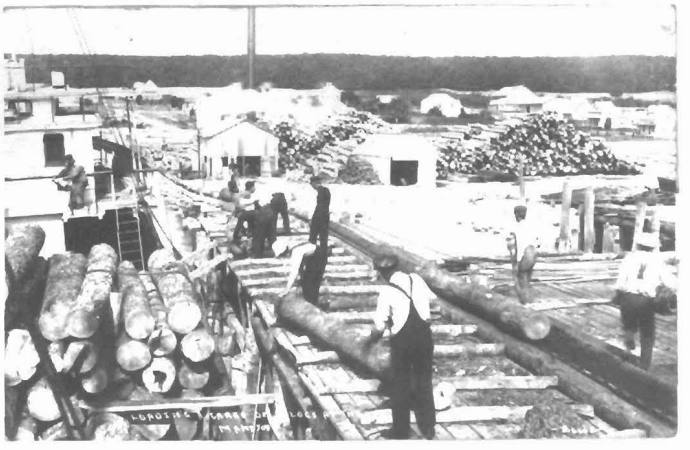
It was not until the end of the century that the Garden City Sand Company, with possession of so much waterfront land on the island, suddenly thought of development. On the Southeast side of the island, the company laid out a resort area with streets running north and south crossed by streets east and west. The names proposed for the streets showed little imagination. They revealed that the developers had a rather Garden-city-bound horizon. Streets north and south were named: Utah, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; while those which ran east and west were called: Flay, Brevoort, Edna, and Sheffler. Even worse were the street names given to a development resort which Garden City proposed for the harbor. East-west streets were named: Lakewood, Ashland, Wabash, Michigan, and Chicago. Those, north and south were Euclid, Claremont, and Riverside, with Grand Boulevard along the shore of the lake. If the island had contributed generously to the rebuilding of Chicago, Chicago was not contributing to the development of the island! From present-day perspectives, how thankful we can be that this development never really took place.

One more attempt was made to develop the island. A group of Michigan businessmen purchased the Beck farm at the south end of the island. What more they intended to do is uncertain, but an article in the *Motor News* for December 1948, chiefly devoted to the beauties and solitude of South Manitou, indicates that the group had rather serious intentions:

> "This little group of Michiganders who are so enthralled with South Manitou are not visionaries — they are hard-headed business men — but they see the possibilities of transforming the island into a paradise of peace in which they may escape from the rigors of this modern life . . . For years the island has been little more than a Coast Guard station and a habitat for a handful of hardy farming individuals, and then almost by accident, it would seem, its primitive beauty, its beautiful little inland lake and untouched forests were discovered by Lee Barrett. . . Now with his associates, he has formed the Lee Island Company to develop what they envision as one of the most beautiful, back-to-nature spots in the nation."

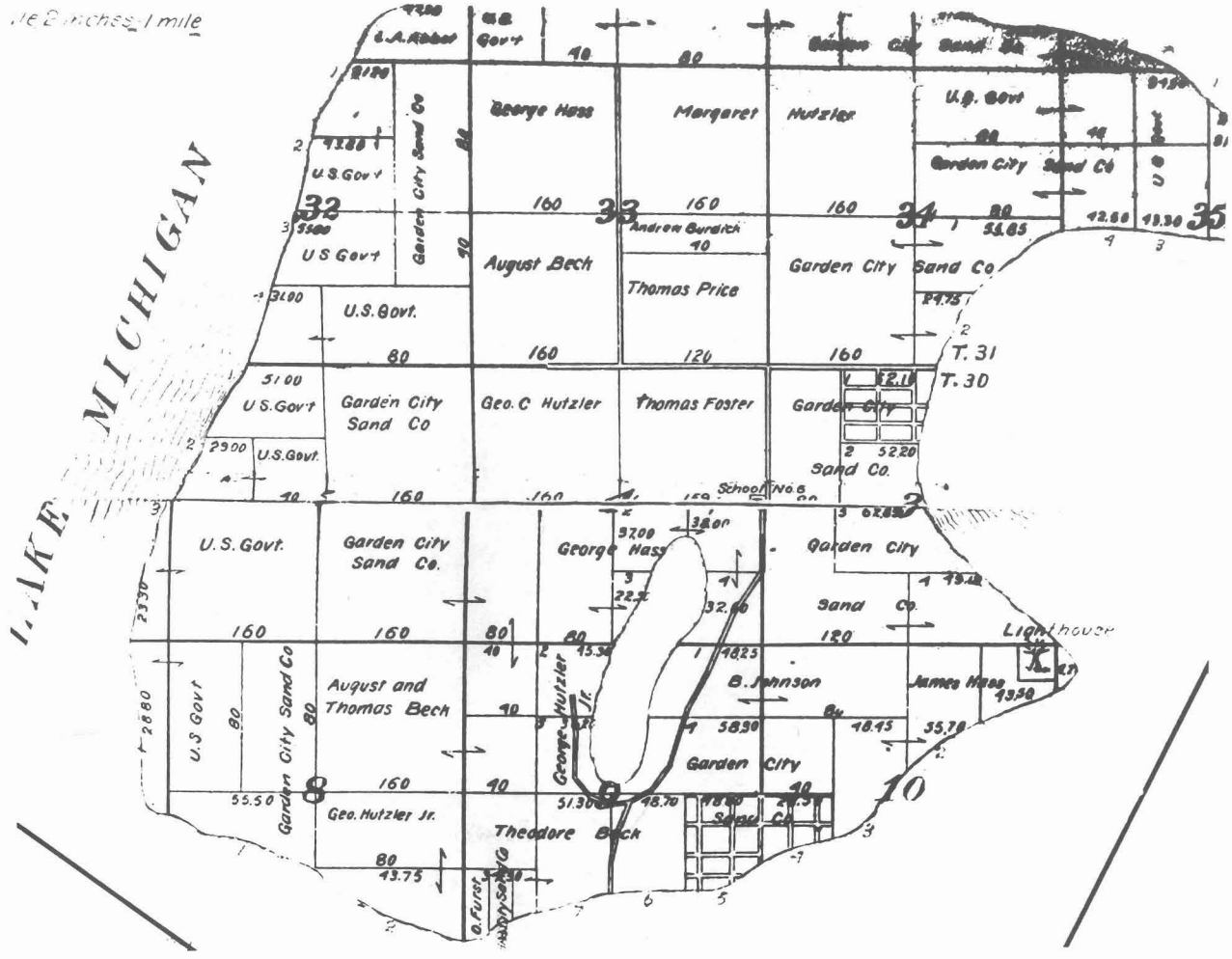
Why the island had to be "transformed into a paradise of peace," which it was already, is difficult to understand. It is interesting, too, to note how each person, disregarding those who were already on it, discovered the island for himself. Apparently, like Columbus and the Indians, those who were already there were only natives. Mr. Barrett was well down the long line of those who discovered South Manitou. Luckily some of those who discovered the island about the same time as Mr. Barrett thought it should remain as it is, without development.





Top — The Burdick store and home near the "old dock."
Center — The *Fred W. Green* steaming into South Manitou harbor for a load of gravel.
Bottom — Loading a cargo of logs. The last big logging operation on South Manitou took place in 1908.

Photograph of Lillian Burdick, nee Vent, wife of James Burdick and postmistress from 1923 to 1928.



Map of South Manitou made around 1900 showing the location of various farms and the extensive holdings of the Garden City Sand Company.

The Lighthouse and Its Keepers

"Its gallant beam throughout the night
Has kept great ships upon their course."

The lighthouse on South Manitou Island is, or was while it was still in operation, perhaps the most beautiful on the Great Lakes. With its round base gracefully tapering toward the summit, it rises some 100 feet above the surface of the water. An attractive iron-wrought lookout surrounds the glass-enclosed tower.

The lighthouse one sees today replaces an earlier lighthouse begun in 1839 and completed early in 1840. On July 7, 1838, Congress appropriated $5,000 for the construction of a lighthouse on South Manitou Island. On June 15, 1839, the Treasury Department gave instructions to the Surveyor General in Cincinnati to reserve public lands for the lighthouse site. Work on the lighthouse started the same year. By the end of spring 1840 it was completed and ready for a keeper. A letter from the Superintendent of Lights at Michilimackinac, dated June 16, 1840, stated that the lighthouse needed a keeper and proposed that William N. Burton be given the position. The superintendent stated that Mr. Burton was a "sober, industrious and good man." On September 28, 1840, the Lighthouse Bureau, Treasury Department, replied confirming the appointment. It set the salary at $350 per annum and instructed the Superintendent, one Abraham Wendell, to "admonish Mr. Burton of the necessity of residing in and being himself steadily in the house provided for the Keeper."

Although no drawing or sketch of the original lighthouse exists, it was precisely that — a house with a light on top of it. Apparently many of the early lighthouses were of this type. The original lighthouse on South Manitou consisted of a one-and-one-half story house of yellow brick with seven rooms including a "sitting room, chamber, and kitchen." Above the house on a round, white, wooden tower measuring six feet in diameter, stood the light or lantern — a stationary beacon of the fourth order. It was reached by means of a wooden staircase. Because of the rise on which the lighthouse was located, its lantern gleamed in the night some seventy feet above sea level. The lighthouse also had a lifeboat and a fog signal. The signal was a bell weighing 1000 pounds and was struck "by means of machinery."

Mr. Burton took charge of the lighthouse and functioned as its keeper for something less than three years. It is quite likely that because of his "industriousness," the keeper's job hindered him from managing his wharf and from superintending the cutting and sale of cordwood for the woodburning steamers that were now stopping regularly at the island. A letter, dated July 20, 1842, from the Treasury Department to the District Superintendent states:

> "The light is complained of as being badly kept. You will inform the Keeper if he does not keep a better light he will have to give place to some person who will. If it should be caused by want of ventilation in the lantern, you will apply the proper remedy. Two of the lamps here throw their light upon the shore, and of course are useless. You will direct the keeper to discontinue them. This keeper it seems, lives a mile from the Lighthouse and does his duty by deputy. You will direct him to remove into the keeper's house and execute the duties himself, in default of which he will be removed without hesitation. It is alleged that this light is obscured in one direction by trees

> which may be removed at an expense of about twenty dollars. You will cause the trees to be removed if you shall find the expense will not exceed twenty or thirty dollars."

From the correspondence of the Lighthouse Bureau, it appears that there was growing difficulty in administering from Washington such a far flung operation. Disbursements and appointments were made and approved in Washington. Instructions, such as the one to the superintendent at Michilimackinac for cutting the trees on South Manitou, are a case in point. After writing that the cost of cutting the trees should not exceed thirty dollars, a letter followed on September 24, 1842, raising the limit of the expenditure to fifty dollars. It must have been irritating to a Federal official to note that over a year later, after having increased the offer, the offending trees were still standing. There is no indication as to when or by whom the trees were finally cut.

On May 30, 1843, a letter was dispatched from Washington appointing Bael Ward as Keeper of South Manitou Light "vice Mr. Burton, removed." The superintendent was again instructed to "admonish the new keeper that he should reside in the lighthouse." Apparently Mr. Burton, without disappointment on his part, took up residence once more in his house near the wharf and turned his attention to his expanding business with the visiting steamers.

The lighthouse keeper's dwelling erected in 1858 was fashioned after the earlier lighthouse. The light or lantern rose above it on a wooden tower. A separate structure was built to house the fog signal.

Recommendations made in 1869 for the construction of a lighthouse tower in front of the dwelling give a good picture of developments that had taken place during the relatively short span of thirty years following the construction of the first lighthouse. The importance of South Manitou harbor for shipping was reemphasized. The report states:

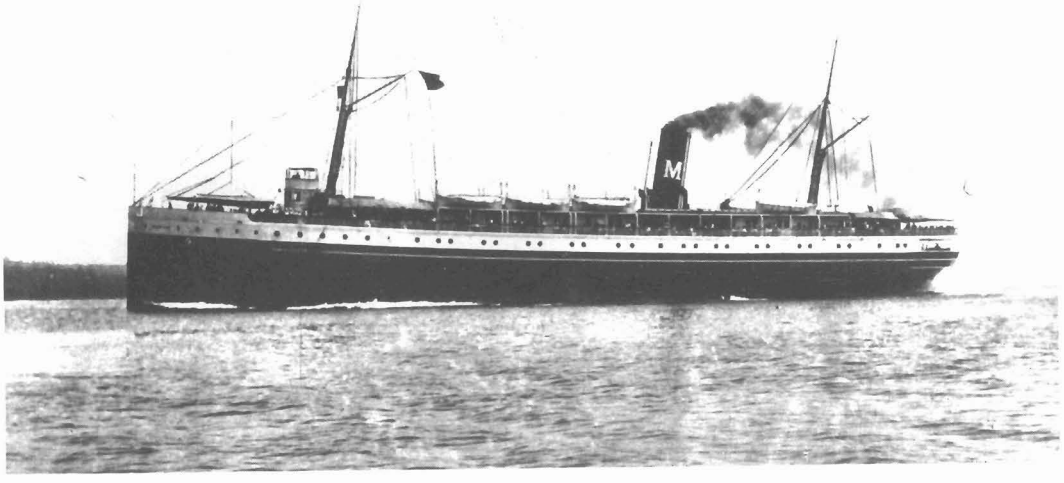
> "Through the channel between South Manitou Island and the mainland, the principal commerce of the Lake passes, guided by this light which should have a lense of a higher order, with greater elevation and a characteristic distinction not readily mistaken. It is also a guide to a harbor of refuge which is probably more used than any other on the entire chain of lakes, and it is frequently impossible to distinguish the present light from those on board of vessels at anchor."

Appropriations were made, over a three-year period, to complete a tower with a third-order lens. A lighthouse inspector's report of 1871 gives an interesting description of work on the tower one sees today:

> "The work of improving this station is in progress, though the working party has been temporarily withdrawn for service elsewhere. All the materials are on the ground and by the 29th of July the entire working force will be again at the station, when it is expected the work will go on uninterruptedly until its completion before the close of the season. The improvements will consist of a third-order tower founded on piles, having its focal plane one hundred feet above the surface of the lake, and a covered passage-way connecting the tower and keeper's dwelling. The improvement will be of great value to the commerce between Lake Michigan and the other lakes."

The construction of the tower in 1871 gave South Manitou one of the highest lighthouse towers on the Great Lakes. The great glass lens was placed on an iron platform which revolved by means of clockwork weights. It is said that on one

Two rare photographs of the South Manitou Lighthouse from the National Archives collection, made in the 1880's.



Passenger boats of the kind that sailed on the lakes at the turn of the century. Both of these boats docked at Glen Haven and South Manitou.
Upper — Photograph of the *S.S. Missouri*, built in 1904 at Chicago, length 225 feet, 2,400 gross tons, 1,250 horsepower engines.
Lower — The *S.S. Manitou*, built in 1893, length 274 feet, 3,000 gross tons, carried a crew of 75 and up to 2,000 passengers.

occasion six ladies who visited the lighthouse stepped inside the glass enclosure protecting the lens to see how many people it would hold. The large kerosene lamp which was placed inside the lens had three concentric wicks of three different heights.

Lighthouse keepers were expected to keep everything shining and spotless. Each morning the keeper washed and shined his lamp chimneys, trimmed the wicks, filled his lamps, rubbed the lens with a chamois skin, wound up his clockwork, and looked around the walls of the lantern room to see whether they were in need of washing or a new coat of gleaming white paint. The circular iron stairs leading to the light were kept clean and well painted. The lighthouse and dwelling had to be ready for inspection at any time. The author recalls visiting the lighthouse while James Burdick was keeper. The impression throughout was one of dazzling cleanliness.

From 1840 to 1872 apparently only one keeper was authorized without an assistant. Following the reconstruction of the lighthouse in 1871, first and second assistants were authorized. At the same time the keeper's salary was raised to $560 per year with $400 for the first assistant. In 1888 the keeper's salary was raised to $600.

Of the lives of the various keepers and assistants of South Manitou Light, little can be related outside the normal course of their careers in the service. Most of them were persons dedicated to providing for the safety of ships and their crews. Undoubtedly many of them performed heroic deeds which are not recorded.

Several of the persons connected with the lighthouse lost their lives under tragic circumstances. Probably the most moving is the accident that befell Keeper Aaron Sheridan and his wife. On a pleasant spring-like day, March 15, 1878, Sheridan with wife and child accepted the invitation for a boat ride from their friend Chris Anchersen. The incident is recorded by Arthur and Evelyn Knudsen:

> "While their two older children watched from the lighthouse window, they started for a sailboat ride with Chris Anchersen and were still within sight of land when a sudden squall came up and capsized the boat. The sail-boom swung around and struck Aaron with such force that he fell into the water. The blow probably knocked him unconscious, for his body never reappeared. Mrs. Sheridan, with her baby clasped tightly in one arm, was clinging to the boat with her free hand. Anchersen looked around for rope with which to fasten Mrs. Sheridan and the baby to the boat, but when he found it, Mrs. Sheridan had lost her hold and both she and her baby had disappeared into the water. Anchersen clung to the boat and drifted toward North Manitou Island, which he finally reached the next day."

This tragic occurrence happened when Louisa Hutzler was ten years old. It left a deep impression on her and she recounted how the Sheridan children walked along the shore weeping and looking out over the water for the bodies of their father and mother.

A fate equally as bad lay in store for John Gallagher. Tall, handsome Gallagher was appointed second assistant under Martin Knudsen who had come to know the Gallagher family on a visit to Beaver Island. He moved up to first assistant in September 1889. What caused him to leave the service on South Manitou the following year is not known. In any event, he went sailing on the ocean, and the island people were shocked to hear shortly thereafter that he had fallen overboard in the Gulf of Mexico, was grabbed by a shark and never seen again.

Thomas Kitchen, born on the island, entered the Lighthouse Service in 1889. A year later he was promoted to first assistant. In 1892 he was named Keeper. With this promotion, he planned to marry one of George Hutzler's granddaughters, Anna Hoeft. Unfortunately, before the young couple could marry, Kitchen came down with pneumonia from which he never recovered.

To end this in a happier vein, John Tobin, the last of the civilian keepers of South Manitou Light, did marry one of George Hutzler's granddaughters, Lottie Hutzler, and spent many happy years on South Manitou with his wife and children.

To piece together the story of the lighthouse and its keepers is most difficult. At best records are fragmentary. In most cases they are non-existent. Except for the years 1938 to 1941 and the period from 1954 to 1958, the logbooks for South Manitou either no longer exist or are lost to the point that no one can find them. The many reorganizations of the Service, creations of new districts, and the transfer of functions from one agency to another have exacted their toll. Transporting records during storms and storing them in places that have caught fire have also contributed to reducing the number of historical documents still available.

The indexing of records also caused difficulties. For example, most of the early correspondence relating to South Manitou Lighthouse is not listed under the name of the light station but under the name of the district superintendent at Michilimackinac. Fortunately, this discovery led to finding the names of the earliest lighthouse keepers.

As for the closing of the lighthouse, practically no details are available. Thus, the most one can say is that after more than a century of faithful service, South Manitou Light was extinguished without fanfare or special commemoration. The advance of technology consigned it to the past. Carrying out plans for automation and the reduction of manpower, the Service erected the North Manitou Shoal Light in 1935 and somewhat later the South Manitou Shoal Lighted Gong Buoy. On December 12, 1958, it closed the lighthouse and removed its personnel. A list of civilian lighthouse keepers beginning with the appointment of William N. Burton in 1840 can be found among the addenda.

Louis Hutzler

Louis — son of George and Margaretha Hutzler, appointed to the Lighthouse Service on South Manitou in 1892, later became Keeper of the Light at Green Bay.

Ernest Hutzler

Ernest Hutzler — son of George Hutzler Jr., appointed to the Service in 1904 and served as Keeper of South Manitou Light from 1928 to 1935, preceding John Tobin, the last Keeper.

Andrew and William Burdick

Andrew and William Burdick — brothers of James Burdick. William was appointed to the Lighthouse Service in 1902, while Andrew served on occasion with the Life-Saving Service.

James Burdick

James Burdick — grandson of Putnam and Melissa Burdick, appointed in 1901, served as Keeper on South Manitou from 1908 to 1928, the longest period served by any of the Keepers of South Manitou Light.

South Manitou Light
1968

South Manitou Light has been extinguished.
For nearly one-hundred long years
Its strong, friendly beam shot
Out across Manitou Passage
Guiding sail and steam alike
Giving a bearing to storm-tossed ships.

It is tall and as beautiful as ever:
A gleaming white shaft
Gracing the southeast tip of the Island;
But vandals have smashed the glass
Surrounding its mantled light
And birds now fly through the opening.
It is sad to one who knew it
In its glory days.

And the fog signal building
At the light's base is barren
And the windows boarded up.
One could see inside
Where the boilers once stood.
A flood of memories surge back. . .

The smell of the hardwood smoke and steam
The wail of the fog signal
That blew its mournful blast.
Again could be heard
A steamer's hoarse call through the misty night
As she worked her way northeastward
Throught the darkened Passage . . . .

But now no cheerful voices could be heard
And the big whistle and the boilers
Are gone and nothing remains
But a damp smell of oil and aging wood.

Radar and modern navigation have outmoded
The faithful old lighthouse,
But she still stands there proudly
On the Point. . . holding her head high
Her only company — the screaming gulls
The wave sounds and the winds of all seasons
That caress her aging walls. . .

Gerald E. Crowner

The Coming of the Life-Saving Service

"Hatches battened, iced and gleaming,
Funnel black against the gloaming,
Rolling, plunging, groaning, bending,
Black night. .snow. .rigging droning,
Off her course. .lost. .tough going.
Dirty Weather!"

It is difficult today for a casual visitor to South Manitou to realize what a large number of vessels formerly passed through the channel between the island and the mainland — schooners, brigantines, barks, side-wheelers, propellor-driven steamboats, sloops, tugs. Depending upon the time of year, there was variety in both size and number. Most of the boats were sailing north or south. A few passed east and west between the two islands. As late as 1902, when the life-saving station was established on South Manitou, over fifty boats of varying types passed the island in a single day. Most of the boats carried grain and lumber or general cargo. It is said that one boat, the steamer *Templeton*, was loaded with 350 barrels of whiskey when she sank near the island.

It is to be expected that with such heavy traffic there would be collisions, especially during fog or sudden snow storms. A steam fog horn was later placed on the island to help the mariners find their way and keep them clear of nearby shoals. During the storms that sometimes reached hurricane force, vessels were dashed against the shores and either wrecked or stranded. With rough weather, most of the boats in the vicinity steered for the protection of South Manitou harbor. Estimates of vessels sheltered there at any one time have reached a figure close to one hundred. In the days of the sailing vessels, the harbor at times appeared like a forest of masts. Sailors' chanteys penetrated inland. Boats that had been too heavily loaded frequently had to dump some of the cargo overboard. The islanders were usually quick to salvage what they could. It is said that some thrifty islanders could live for a whole year on what they salvaged during a few days.

Shipwrecks and loss of life on the Great Lakes were matched only by those on the Atlantic. During the summer of 1848 the country became aroused by a series of disastrous wrecks on the East Coast in the vicinity of New York. As a result, the first federal appropriation was made "for providing surf boats, rockets, carronades, and other necessary apparatus for the better preservation of life and property from shipwrecks on the coast of New Jersey." But the equipment was placed in the hands of volunteer crews who had little or no training and supervision. And there was no accountability for the equipment. Vandalism and theft resulted. Bands of coastal dwellers in the East made their living by preying on wrecked ships and their victims. It is said that those on Long Island were among the worst. In 1854 Congress appropriated an additional $12,000 for a number of designated ports on the Great Lakes.

From 1871 to 1874, Congress passed a series of acts that provided for regularly paid crews on both coasts and the Great Lakes. Finally in 1878 a Congressional investigation was made of this service in connection with a series of disasters. The result was that the Life-Saving Service was set up as a regular unit of the

Treasury Department with full bureau status. The act set fixed periods during which stations should be open. It required crews to reside at the various stations during the active season. Keepers were to reside there at all times. It fixed rates of compensation for keepers, crews, and volunteers. It authorized drills and exercises with equipment.

According to coast guard historians, the prime objective was the saving of lives and property in cases of shipwreck. This continued to be the most extensive and onerous work performed.

> "It involved maintaining patrols and lookouts, the manning and operation of surf boats, the boarding of vessels in distress, the transportation of the rescued to shore, and care, shelter and first-aid attention to those in need, also the operation of breeches-buoys and other shore-rescue apparatus and signals. As a corollary of these duties came the work of resuscitating persons apparently drowned; also the salvaging, pumping out, and bailing of vessels, and assisting crews to manipulate disabled craft."

But the passage of the act setting up the Life-Saving Service did not mean immediate implementation. Years passed while studies were made to determine where stations should be placed most advantageously. The Manitou Passage was especially difficult. Some persons thought that the station should be placed at Sleeping Bear Point; others thought it should be on South Manitou Island. Considerable time was lost trying to determine at which location the station would be more effective. In the end it was decided that stations were needed at both places. No small credit for the decision went to a marine correspondent for several midwestern newspapers, Charles Burmeister. A letter Burmeister sent to the U.S. Life-Saving Service in Washington, D.C. provides a graphic account of why two stations were needed and not one.

January 22, 1889

Hon Sumner J. Kimball
General Superintendent
U.S. Life-Saving Service
Washington, D. C.

Sir

In compliance with your verbal request at the time of your tour of inspection to ascertain the most suitable place to locate a life saving station — viz. Sleeping Bear Point or South Manitou Island, I will try and answer it at this late date.

In order to get the opinions of Lake captains, sailors, fishermen, and old settlers, I have questioned a large number of them and find that the old adage proves a true one — "many men — many minds" scarcely finding two that agree. Some thinking it an absolute necessity to have a station located on Sleeping Bear Point, others insist that South Manitou is the desired spot. But in sifting the chaff, I find that both places are dangerous to navigation and life saving stations are needed at both points.

Sleeping Bear Point and vicinity presents a sterile and inhospitable coast — an elevation rising almost perpendicular from the Lake, ranging in height from 300 to 500 feet, the whole covering an area of about six square miles. . . During heavy gales, the breakers dash right up the base of the banks, and all work at wrecks would have to be done

with "gun and line" from the high Bear Bank. It is not possible to work with boats, unless near the point, where there is a flat little glen suitable for a station and where surf boats can be launched and worked. Numerous craft have been wrecked there, no record has been kept. But among the important ones can be mentioned:

Propeller	*General Taylor*	1855	total loss
Propeller	*Milwaukee*		rescued
British Schooner	*Kate Bully*	1869	total loss
American Brig	*Badger State*	1871	total loss
American Schooner	*Gold Hunter*		total loss
American Schooner	*Atalanta*	1878	total wreck
Propeller	*Concord*	1885	rescued
Propeller	*Missouri*	1885	rescued

The steam barge, *T. D. Stimson,* lumber laden, July 12, 1888, pulled off by the passenger Prop *City of Charlevoix.* There are many others of which names and dates are at present not available. The reports of the Life-Saving Service show that the following strandings occurred on Sleeping Bear Point as follows: 1875, one; 1876, one; 1885 and 1887, total four.

Empire Bluffs is six miles south of Sleeping Bear Point with an altitude of 400 feet. Here also have occurred many disasters. The bluff derived its name by the stranding of the sidewheeler steamer *Empire* about 40 years ago. Here also the grain laden schooner *Jessie and Annie* was wrecked with heavy loss of life. Besides many other unfortunate crafts whose names and particulars I cannot now learn. But nearby at Otter Creek, the schooner *Gertrude* was lost with loss of life in 1881, and abreast of there the Prop *Westmoreland* foundered in 1855 with a loss of eighteen lives.

Glen Haven and Glen Arbor are in the bay just north of Sleeping Bear Point and in a good anchorage during SSW and easterly gales, and also here have occurred numerous marine disasters: among them can be mentioned the loss of grain laden schooner *W.B. Phelps* of Oswego, and most of the crew perished — frozen to death in the rigging — in November 1879. The Schooner *Guy Spangler* — grain laden also was lost there a few years previous. The U.S. Life-Saving record also shows wrecks in 1880, 1883, and at Pyramid Point one in 1883 and two in 1884.

The above list of accidents show that it is a dangerous locality, and a life station would fill a long desired want. A good site would be at the point of "Little Bear," and a "lookout" could be built up at the top of the Bear where a patrol man could scan the lake for miles, have telephone connection from lookout to the station also to Glen Arbor and Empire, in case of accidents at either side. The Keeper could arrange for teams, etc by telephone.

Further: marine accidents occur at South Manitou Island during heavy gales, tugs and help wanted — there are no means of getting the news of the disaster to the mainland. A system of signals could be arranged with the islanders, such as "Wreck — Help Wanted! Send Tug!" The signal read by aid of glass, by station on the Bear; thence telephone to Western Union office at Glen Haven, who could wire to nearest tug to come and assist. If however a cable is laid between Island and mainland, the signalling would be unnecessary.

South Manitou Island with her natural harbor or bay is eagerly sought by all storm-tossed vessels; during gales it is not uncommon to see from 15 to 50 vessels, steamers, etc., anchored there. Accidents occur there every year, among them may be mentioned:

1854	Brigantine	*J. Young Scammon*
1875	Schooner	*J. W. Hutchinson*
1879	Schooner	*W. B. Allen*
	British	*Bangalore*
1881	Schooner	*W. W. Brigham*
1883	Propeller	*Potomac*
	Schooner	*Emma*
	Schooner	*H. C. Richards*
	Schooner	*D. E. Bailey*
1884	Schooner	*Guiding Star*
1885	Propeller	*Jarvis Lord*
1886	Schooner	*Elgin*
	Schooner	*Libbie Nan*
1887	Propeller	*Waverly*

The life saving report gives the following disasters off South Manitou Island: 1880, one; 1881, five; 1882, two; 1884, three; 1885, one; and 1887, two. Between 1880 and 1887, 13 off North Manitou.

As far as can be ascertained there have been boat fires where many lives were lost, but a large number of these craft became total wrecks. Besides these there have been many collisions, vessels dismasted, leaking, some waterlogged, etc. All vesselmen earnestly desire that a life saving station should also be established on South Manitou Island, it being an isolated place, and with the assistance of the life crew many a disaster could be averted, and much property saved.

These disasters occur most during fogs at all time of year or during snow storms in spring and fall. Grain shipments are direly late in the fall, and owners desirous to earn as much as possible (instead of sending their vessels in winter quarters) are offered high rate of freight to take "just one more" cargo before the freeze up and the craft is again sent out. Sometimes the trip is made in safety and "all's well." Still they are liable without warning to be overtaken by violent gales, generally accompanied by a thick sleeting snow storm and freezing weather. The spray dashes over the vessel, his shrouds, ropes, running lines, gradually cover with ice — the sails frozen stiff as a board, the schooner almost helpless plunges along — the land marks, lighthouse cannot be seen, the driving snow shuts out everything — the sea room gets narrowed down, the vessel is hove to, but of little use — before long they are driven ashore, the crew through former exertions nearly exhausted now rush to the rigging and there perish miserably in sight of land — UNLESS — a life station is near at hand (placed there by a wise expenditure of Congress) or should be at all exposed points, and they are saved from an awful death.

Having been Marine Correspondent for Chicago — Milwaukee — Detroit and Cleveland papers many years, and in a position to observe, and have during that time seen and learned to appreciate the U.S. Life Saving Service, do also herewith most earnestly recommend the building of life stations on Sleeping Bear and South Manitou Island.

Yours respectfully,

(sgd) Charles Burmeister

Almost fiften years passed between the posting of the Burmeister letter and the setting up of the life-saving station on South Manitou. Most of the time in between had been lost in trying to determine who held title to the peoperty on which the station was to be built. Title to the land was disputed by Joseph Haas and the Garden City Sand Company. And so time passed. And it happened that with a

Riding out the storm

Remains of the Schooner *Lomie A. Burton,* built in Chicago in 1873 and wrecked on the shores of South Manitou, November 17, 1911. Photo taken in 1928.

diminishing need for life saving stations due to the decline and changes of shipping, a station was finally and belatedly placed where it could have done so much good at an earlier date. The golden era of sailing vessels on the Great Lakes was over. Burmeister and the Life-Saving Service did not realize it, but the period from the end of the Civil War through the 1880's saw the greatest flow of vessels that would ever sail the Great Lakes again. As Harlan Hatcher has put it: barques, barquentines, fore-'n-afters, three- and four-masted schooners, and various combination rigs built by the hundreds attained almost a monopoly for moving freight until they were driven off the lakes near the end of the century by the competition of the large steam freighters.

The period of the sailing vessels was a romantic one. Sailors' chanteys helped to unfurl the sails and lift the anchors or fasten boats to docks. Anonymous poets commemorated the feats or fates of boats and crew. Some of the poems, if they may be called such, provide one with a lively picture of the hazards of sailing on Lake Michigan in the vicinity of the islands:

"The wind veered round to sou'-sou'-west and blew both fresh and strong
And through the waters of Lake Michigan the Bigler she rolled on;
And far beyond her foaming bow the dashing waves did fling;
With every inch of canvas set, her course was wing-and-wing
The wind it hauled ahead, my boys, as we reached the Manitous -
Two dollars and a half a day just suited the Bigler's crew-
From there until the Beavers, we steered her full and by;
We kept her on the wind, my boys, as close as she would lie. . .

In 1892 a severe storm during the night overtook the steamer *W. H. Gilcher* off South Manitou. She sank with all hands on board:

On October twenty-eight
Oh, how the wind did scream!
The last time the *Gilcher*
And crew was ever seen.
Of death these jolly lads
Never once did dream
As routed for Milwaukee
They from Port Huron steamed.
It was a fearful night
The Gilcher should turned-to,
But she held to her course
'Til off the Manitous
Says a sailor's hurried note
That later came to light
They were breasting mountainous seas
At nine o'clock that night
Lost in Lake Michigan
They did not reach the shore,
The gallant ship and crew
Will sail the Lakes no more.

In 1869 ninety-seven ships were lost or broken up by a four-day hurricane that swept the lakes clear. In 1880 the great gale of October 15 and 16 took a toll of 188 lives and wrecked some ninety vessels. Between 1878 and 1898, almost six thousand vessels were wrecked on the Great Lakes. The severity of storms on the

lakes has been attested to by sailors who have battled waves on both the Great Lakes and the ocean. The only difference according to old hands is the taste of the spray as it lashes the boat.

Of the various wrecks listed by Burmeister in his letter of 1889 few details are available. Short descriptions of some of the boats are to be found in the *List of Merchant Vessels of the United States, 1886.* For example, the *Jarvis Lord* was built in Marine City, New York, in 1873, having a length of 178 feet, weighing 770 gross tons, and having 500 horsepower engines. Her home port was Buffalo. The schooner *Libbie Nan* had her home port in Suttons Bay. She was built in Green Bay in 1867, length 129 feet, weight 232 tons. The steamer *Waverly* wrecked in 1887 was built in 1874 and had her homeport in Buffalo. She was 191 feet long and weighed 1,104 tons.

The most famous of the ships mentioned by Burmeister was the passenger steamship *Empire State*, from which the village of Empire derives its name. She was at that time one of the largest and most luxurious ships on the Great Lakes. On August 8, 1849, heading up the lake from Chicago, she got caught in a violent storm and sprang a leak. For fear of sinking, her captain ran her up on the beach south of Sleeping Bear where she remained until she could be released and placed in service again. Her paddle wheels were 38 feet in diameter. The length of the *Empire State* was 298 feet. She weighed 1,553 gross tons, was built in St. Clair in 1848 and was decommissioned in 1857.

As a postcript to Burmeister's letter stressing the need for two life-saving stations in the area, it should be noted that, at the time he wrote, fleets of the Great Lakes carried a greater volume of maritime trade than was accounted for by the entire foreign commerce of the United States.

From Life Saving Service to Coast Guard

"We have nothing to fear from the
wind and the wave
While our muscles are stout and our
hearts are brave."

The Coast Guard Station on South Manitou was originally a station of the U.S. Life-Saving Service and was known as such until 1915. In that year, the Life-Saving Service was combined with the Revenue-Cutter Service to form the United States Coast Guard.

The station on South Manitou opened with a crew of six surfmen on August 20, 1902, under the supervision of Keeper or Captain, as they were usually called, Gus B. Lofberg. Lofberg arrived on the island as early as February 21, 1902, but most of his time before the arrival of a crew was spent in receiving and making an inventory of supplies and equipment.

On May 29, a working party arrived from Manistee to erect a flagpole on the station premises. A day later the schooner *D. A. Wells* arrived with furnishings which included tables, chairs, cook stove, iron kettles, two barrels of crockery, life belts, shovels, wheelbarrows, five iron beds, one bale of mattresses, compasses, chisels, etc. A week later a shipment arrived containing the International Code of Signals, one red flag and one white flag for signaling, four general service signaling flags, four megaphones, two Lyle guns, one hawser cutter, shotlines of varying strengths and lengths, six signal cases, and one life car. The surf boats with equipment arrived three days later. Among other arrangements, an agreement was made with George Hutzler Jr. to supply twelve cords of wood.

On August 8, Captain Lofberg was ready to select a crew. He records:

> "I received this day from the Superintendent of this District a certificate of 8 eligibles from which I have selected the following names: Jacob M. Jacobsen, J. Thorwald Jesperson, John Hanneson, Edgar Phelps, Frithjof Nelson, and Alexander H. Egeland, to become members of this crew. I have notified each one respectively that he has been selected and requested an answer, whether he accept or not, at once."

As busy as Lofberg was in making preparations for the operation of the station, he was not so preoccupied with administrative details that he would overlook a vessel in distress. He was true to his calling. On April 6, 1902, five months before the station crew arrived, the following entry appears in the station log:

> "At 7:45 p.m. a steamer went ashore about 200 yards east of the Station. I immediately launched the Lighthouse boat and in company with Lighthouse Keeper Thomas Armstrong went out and offered our assistance. The steamer proved to be *M. C. Neff*, Captain Gunderson of Milwaukee, loaded with lumber and cordwood bound from Empire, Michigan, to Milwaukee. The Captain of steamer being unable to work her off, concluded to wait until daylight before making any further attempt to get off. I left the steamer and returned to the station at 9:30 p.m.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
LIFE-SAVING SERVICE.
Form 1808.

JOURNAL.

Station. So Manitou

District No. 12

Wednesday, August 20th, 1902

CONDITION OF THE SURF.			
Midnight.	Sunrise.	Noon.	Sunset.
Smooth X	Smooth X	Smooth X	Smooth X
Light	Light	Light	Light
Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Rough	Rough	Rough	Rough
High	High	High	High
Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high

a. The keeper will make a cross immediately after the word indicating the condition of the surf at midnight, sunrise, noon, and sunset.

Direction and force of wind, and state of weather at midnight, N E Light Cloudy

Direction and force of wind, and state of weather at sunrise, N E Light Rain

Direction and force of wind, and state of weather at noon, N E Light Rain

Direction and force of wind, and state of weather at sunset, N W Light Cloudy

ENTER THE READING OF BAROMETER AND THERMOMETER AT MIDNIGHT, SUNRISE, NOON, AND SUNSET.

Barometer—Midnight, 29.30 ; Sunrise, 29.30 ; Noon, 29.27 ; Sunset, 29.25

Thermometer—Midnight, 60° ; Sunrise, 64° ; Noon, 74° ; Sunset, 62°

(Fill in, in the blank spaces below, the names of the patrolmen or watch, the names of the patrolmen met, and the name of the station the latter were from.)

Station Watch and PATROL.

Hanson, midnight to ~~2~~ 4 a. m., ~~met~~ Jesperson 2 p m, ~~from~~ 4 p.m. Station.
Jacobson, ~~midnight~~ 2.a.m. to 4 a. m., ~~met~~ Martin First 4 " , " 6 p.m. "
Jesperson, 4 a. m. to ~~sunrise, met~~ 6 a.m Haas 6 " , " 8 " "
Martin First, 6 a. m. to ~~sunrise, met~~ 7 a.m D. First 8 " , "10 " "
Haas, ~~7 a.m.~~ ~~sunrise~~ to 8 ~~a.m, met~~ 7a.m. a.m Hanson 10 " , "12 midnight "
D. First, ~~8 a.m.~~ ~~sunrise~~ to ~~6 p. m, met~~ 8a.m 10 a.m —Patrols— " "
Hanson, ~~6 p. m.~~ 10.a.m to ~~midnight, met~~ 12 m. Jacobson, midnight to 2 a.m. "
Jacobson, 12 m to ~~midnight, met~~ 2 P.M. Hanson 2 a.m. " 4 a " "

Is the house thoroughly clean? yes Hanson 8 p m to 10 p m D First 10 p m to midnight

Is the house in good repair? Yes

Is the apparatus in good condition? Yes

Was any member of the crew (including keeper) absent on liberty, if so, who, and from what hour to what hour?

Was anyone absent on twenty-four hours' leave, if so, who?

Was anyone absent for other cause, if so, who, and why?

Name of substitute: in place of , surfman.

(Fill in the number of vessels of each class that have passed the station this day.)

Ships, barks, brigs, 10 schooners, 2/ steamers.

GENERAL REMARKS.

(Under this head are to be stated all transactions relating to house or service.)

I opened station at midnight to day for active service with 3 regular surfmen Jacob M. Jacobson Thorwald Jesperson and John Hanneson and 3 temporary surfmen George Haas, Martin First and David First.

In the forenoon the beach apparatus was fitted out and put in condition, in the afternoon I took crew out in the Monomoy surfboat and showed them where patrolposts ~~are~~ were located.

In making his ~~first~~ patrol from 2 a m to 4 a.m. Surfman Hanson failed to make the impression on the disc of his patrol clock, being his first patrol, he did not know the exact spot where the post was located and after walking to within 75 yards of the key post he turned back thinking that he had already passed the post

Gust Hofberg
Keeper.

April 7, 1902:

"I boarded the stranded steamer *Neff* at 8 a.m. with the Lighthouse boat, and assisted to shift part of the cargo from aft to forward. Being unable to work the steamer off, the Captain requested me to take him over to Glen Arbor so that he could telegraph for a tug. I obtained the Lighthouse boat, left Station at 5:30 p.m. sailed over to Glen Arbor. In making the landing at Glen Arbor pier in a rough sea, Captain Gunderson fell overboard. I managed to pull him in the boat and make the landing successfully. After Captain Gunderson had changed his clothes and telegraphed for a tug, we started back and arrived at the Station at midnight.

April 8, 1902:

"The Steamer *Neff* worked off without the assistance of a tug, after making repairs on the rudder, which was broke, the steamer proceeded on their voyage. I have today filled out Preliminary Wreck Report on form 1806 and forwarded same to General Superintendent and District Superintendent respectively."

In addition to making reports similar to the preceding one, Lofberg was expected to record daily the number and types of vessels that passed the station, the direction and velocity of the wind at stated hours, the general nature of the weather, and variations in temperature.

On August 20, 1902, after the arrival of three permanent surfmen, Captain Lofberg was ready to open the station. At midnight of the same day, he formally began service. The crew consisted of Jacob Jacobsen, Thorwald Jesperson, John Hanneson, George I. Haas, Martin Furst, and David Furst. George Haas and the Furst brothers were recruited locally. The composition of this opening crew was already an indication of what lay ahead. Although the crew for the station was regularly recruited from the mainland, strong support was provided by young men from families on the island. George Haas and Martin Furst ended up as permanent members of the crew and after a time became surfman No. 1 and surfman No. 2 respectively. As time went on, other islanders included Lawrence Haas, David Furst, Andrew Burdick, Theodore Thompson, Benth Johnson, Harrison Haas, and Harold Tobin. Harrison Haas was the only islander to become keeper of the station, although both George I. Haas and Martin Furst were acting keepers for extended periods of time.

The first few days after the opening of the Station, Lofberg drilled his crew in practicing with International and General Service Code signals, and most important "practice in restoring the apparently drowned." Station watches were carried out on a twenty-four hour basis as well as patrols. Surfman Jesperson resigned after three days complaining of sore feet. When the crew was not busy with drills it was kept occupied by cleaning, painting, cutting wood, and repairing machinery. Preparations were also made for a boathouse to accommodate a thirty-four foot lifeboat.

Entries in the station's logbook or journal during the first few months give an interesting picture of activities during this early period when crew and captain were new and learning to work together:

August 19, 1902:

"While on the south patrol at 10:45, temporary surfman Martin Furst sighted a schooner, dangerously near the shore, heading in on the port tack. He at once burned a coston light, where-upon the schooner tacked and headed out."

September 3, 1902:

"Lawrence Haas reports schooner "Cape Horn" gone ashore at 5:45 at 1½ mile north of station. Assistance from the tug *Maggie Lutz* worked the schooner off and brought her through to a safe anchorage in the harbor."

October 21, 1902:

"At 8:30 a.m. the lake bed in front of the station, where the boathouse is under course of construction, slid away, thereby completely wrecking the pile foundation for the boathouse. The crew assisted to secure part of the wreckage and keep some from drifting away. In the afternoon I sailed over to Glen Haven to send a telegram to the superintendent of construction notifying him of the disaster."

November 5, 1902:

"At midnight, surfman Nelson reported that he had heard a steamer sound whistles of distress, while he was on the south patrol. As he was uncertain as to the direction of the sound, I sent surfman Hanneson to the SW Point of the Island to ascertain if any vessel was in distress at that point. Hanneson sighted a steamer ashore about 3½ miles S.W. from the station at 1:10 a.m. After having burned a costen light to notify the steamer's crew that they were seen, he at once returned to the station and reported the disaster. We immediately launched Monomy surfboat and pulled down to the steamer, which proved to be the "Pueblo" loaded with wheat bound from Chicago to Buffalo. The Captain of the Steamer requested me to take his mate over to Glen Haven so that he from there could telegraph for tugs to release him.

I had five surfmen to stand by the steamer in the Monomoy surfboat and assist to lighten her up. I took one surfman with me in the station supply boat and brought the mate of the steamer over to Glen Haven, after the mate had made arrangements for tugs, we sailed back to the steamer. I kept the whole station crew at work on the steamer until 8 p.m. then sent two surfmen back to the station in the supply boat; continued with four surfmen to assist to lighten the steamer, until arrival of the wrecking tug "Favorite" at midnight."

November 6, 1902:

"After having taken off about 12,000 bushels of her cargo, the steamer "Pueblo" was released at 6:30 a.m. by the tug "Favorite" who brought the steamer into the harbor. After divers had made temporary repairs on the steamer's bottom, she proceeded on her voyage to Buffalo. The crew of the "Pueblo" consisted of 16 men."

And so the record runs. On December 1, Captain Lofberg closed the station for its first active season. Happily he received on the same day from the superintendent of his district checks for the November salary for the crew and himself. After paying the crew, Lofberg took them to Glen Haven where they departed for home. Those who resided on the island rejoined their families.

Of all the keepers of the South Manitou Station, Captain Lofberg comes through most vividly with his entries in the logbook. Although he was on South Manitou only two years, he set a precedent in reporting that was never met by his successors. It is true that as time went on the journals were changed and less and less space was left for recording the details of special events. However, the extent of Lofberg's vocabulary and his choice of words reveals an intelligence and perceptiveness that is lacking in the reports of his successors. They also reveal a broad and kind concern for human beings. Lofberg's duty as he saw it was to save life. It did not matter to him whether it was the life of a sailor on a boat imperiled by heavy seas or that of an islander who was seriously ill and in need of a doctor from the mainland. And somehow people must have felt this kindly paternalism.

Lofberg's best report is the detailed account of the wreck of the steamer *Walter L. Frost* on November 4, 1903. The steamer, with a crew of nineteen men aboard, was headed for Ogdenburg, New York, from Chicago loaded with corn and general cargo. Nearing the southwest end of the island, she ran into a heavy fog. The report tells the rest:

> "At 3:30 p.m. November 4 while surfman George I. Haas was on the SW patrol, we heard a steamer sound signals of distress on the SW end of the Island. I had only five surfmen at the station and engaged Lawrence Haas as volunteer surfman, launched the *Beebe McLellan* surfboat and pulled around to the steamer. We picked up Patrolman Haas about a mile from the station and continued on towards the wreck arriving there at 4:45 p.m. The captain of the steamer requested me to send a telegram for a tug to come to his assistance. I landed one surfman on the west side of the island and sent him to the station to forward the telegraph despatch. Stood by the steamer during the night and assisted to lighten her up.
>
> "By midnight the wind had changed to fresh N.W. and a high sea was running causing the steamer to pound heavily so that she had to be scuttled to save her from breaking up. The wrecking tug *Favorite* arrived at 1:20 a.m. on November 6 and commenced wrecking operations, but had to abandon the steamer at 3 p.m. on the 7th instant on account of the heavy sea. We landed seven crew at the station at 6 p.m. on the 7th after having been towed out to the wreck by the tug *Favorite*. I could not obtain the service of a tug to tow us out again on account of the heavy sea. We started out with the *McLellan* surfboat under sail at 7 p.m. and arrived at the wreck (3 miles distant) at midnight, dropped anchor well to windward of the wreck and veered alongside and took off the last seven men that remained aboard. Seven of the crew had made a landing in their own boat before dark by slacking the boat down with a line until clear of the heaviest breakers when they cut the line and were washed ashore after which they made their way to the station.
>
> "The whole crew are sheltered at the station up to date awaiting the arrival of a steamer to take them away. In addition to the steamers crew of 19 men, there were two more men aboard. There was no insurance on the vessel. Twenty-one men were given stimulants to revive from the cold."

Several days later, with seas still unabated, Lofberg added: "We put some men aboard to investigate her condition. She was found to be badly twisted and broken in two and was given up as a total loss."

Captain Lofberg's skill as a sailor and his concern for human life are demonstrated by his assistance to those on the island in need of medical aid. On April 16, 1903, the log records:

> "A sailboat left this island yesterday to go to Glen Haven to bring a doctor over here to a woman who is very sick. As the boat had not returned by 10 o'clock this forenoon, I sailed over to Glen Haven in monomy surfboat to see what had become of him. I found the boat in Glen Haven waiting for the doctor who did not want to go over as long as the stormy weather continued. I took some medicine that the doctor prescribed for the woman and sailed back arriving at the station at 4 p.m.; the sailboat followed 3 hours later with the doctor."

July 28, 1903:

> "A man by the name of Arthur Miller having been seriously wounded during a stabbing affray last night, I was requested by the manager of the saw mill here to go to the mainland and bring a physician over to dress his wounds. I left the station at 8 a.m. in Mackinaw sailboat, sailed over to Glen Arbor and brought a doctor back who gave

the wounded man the necessary treatment needed. After his wounds had been taken care of, I brought the doctor back to Glen Arbor. I returned to the station at 7 p.m. The boat drill was postponed until tomorrow."

In November 1903, after only two seasons of service, Lofberg was transferred to Racine and Jacob Van Weelden succeeded him. Little did Lofberg realize at that time that within ten years he would return to South Manitou Island for periodic inspections as Superintendent of the Twelfth Life-Saving District.

Captain Van Weelden remained on South Manitou for almost four years. Unfortunately his reports of wrecks and unusual incidents are not as graphic as those of Lofberg, partly due perhaps to the decrease in space left for reporting in the log-books. The most unusual occurrence during Van Weelden's period of service was the destruction by fire of the Steamer *Congress* in South Manitou harbor. On October 4, 1904, Van Weelden reports:

"At 10 p.m. received telephone call from Post Office that a steamer loaded with lumber laying at the dock was all afire. We launched *Long Branch* surfboat and pulled to the steamer which was the steamer *Congress*. The captain requested us to try and tow her away from the dock and scuttle her which we did. We let go her anchor then manned our station pump and tried to save the cargo and steamer. We stood by the steamer during that night. On October 5 we threw off some of her deckload of lumber and worked the pump but could not check the fire and had to give it up. Returned to the station at 4 a.m. and at 11 a.m. the steamer went down and is a total loss. At 7:30 a.m. the captain of the schooner *Mary Ludwig* requested us to look for his anchor and chain that he had lost during the night in getting away from the burning steamer. We found his chain and anchor and helped to heave his schooner."

An entry for August 1, 1905 lists the crew as comprising: Jacob Jacobson, no. 1 surfman; George I. Haas, no. 2; Martin Furst, no. 3; James Mikula, no. 4; George Kelderhouse, no. 5; John Tobin, no. 6; and Benth Johnson, no. 7.

Apparently Captain Van Weelden managed a well-disciplined crew. Although there were no incidents of neglect of duty reported during Lofberg's tour, Van Weelden noted on November 14, 1906:

"I visited the lookout and found the watchman Surfman Harold H. Barnard asleep, lying on the floor, and for thirteen minutes I watched him, then woke him up and suspended him for neglect of watch duty. Pending the result, I have employed Benth Johnson to go on duty at midnight as temporary surfman."

There is no indication that Surfman Barnard was ever reinstated. Certainly his name never reappeared on the records of the South Manitou station.

Leaving Surfman George I. Haas in charge, Captain Van Weelden departed from South Manitou on January 26, 1907, to take command of the life-saving station at Holland, Michigan. He was succeeded by Eli E. Pugh whose arrival was delayed because of ice floes. It must have been a cold winter and an even colder spring. On April 27, Pugh reported that he had "postponed working with the beach apparatus today on account of the ground being covered with snow!"

Except for the drowning of Thomas Thompson in South Manitou harbor in 1910, little in the way of unusual incidents happened during the three and one-half years that Captain Pugh was in charge of the life-saving station. A few entries from Pugh's time are included in the addenda. Hardly had Pugh left and Captain Kent arrived, when the *S. S. Bethlehem*, fully loaded and heading for Buffalo, ran aground on the

U.S. Life-Saving crew — 1906. Left to right: Captain Jacob Van Weelden, Surfman 1, George I. Haas; Surfman 2, Martin Furst; Surfman 3, James Mikula; Surfman 4, George Kelderhouse; Surfman 5, John K. Tobin; Surfman 6, Harold Barnard.

The Coast Guard crew — 1928. Left to right: Boatswain's Mate, 1st Class, Willis Mackey; Herbert E. Gould, Surfman; Fred Looze; Surfman, Robert Johnson, Surfman; Alfred Anderson, Surfman; Harold Tobin, Motor Machinist Mate, 1st Class; William Fisher, Chief Boatswain's Mate. The picture was taken by Gerald Crowner also a member of the crew.

South Manitou Island crew rolling a surfboat out of the boathouse for a boat drill.

Coast Guard lifeboat breaking through the ice in the harbor. Both photographs circa 1928.

island. The wreck of the *S. S. Bethlehem* was reported in such detail and in so disjointed a manner that it was found necessary to abridge it and include it among the addenda.

Captain Kent was the last keeper in charge of the life-saving station and the first one in charge of the coast guard. Some twelve "captains" followed him. One of these was Harrison Haas who had been born on the island. The records reveal little in the way of wrecks or disasters that happened during the era of the coast guard, that is from 1915 until the station was officially closed, along with the lighthouse, in 1958. The wreck of the Liberian freighter, *Francisco Morazan*, occurred on November 29, 1960. Two helicopters from the Traverse City Coast Guard Station and three ships, the *Charlevoix*, the *Cheboygan*, and the *Sturgeon Bay*, took part in rescuing the thirteen-man crew and the captain's wife. The ship was bound from Chicago to Rotterdam.

John Hutzler
(1865 - 1944)

Of all the Hutzlers, John was the most worthy of the name "Islander." He was born on the island and he died there. With the exception of a few visits to Chicago in later years, he lived his entire life on South Manitou. As a young man, he saw the island at the height of its development—dotted with prosperous farms, its harbor a haven for ships of all shapes and sizes, a regular port of call for many passenger boats, including some of the largest on the Great Lakes. He also knew its active community life.

As a boy he helped his father on the farm. At one time, he relates:

> "Father was plowing, and I saw from a hill nearby twenty-four schooners going east and west at one time. It was a beautiful sight."

During storms he saw the boats crowded into the harbor until the view looked like a forest of masts. It looked that way frequently during early spring and late fall. During the great storm of 1880, sometimes referred to as "The Great Blow," or the "Alpena Gale," because it sank the passenger steamship *Alpena*, John Hutzler, then a lad of fifteen, saw the wrecks of five schooners that had been dashed against the shores of the island.

For amusement John had his friends Henry and Willie Haas, Jimmie Armstrong, and Tommie Kitchen, who joined him in fishing or swimming or hunting pigeons. The flocks of passenger pigeons were so great that in flight they sometimes covered the island "from one end to the other and clear across."

A pleasant picture of the island in the 1880's, as John knew it, is provided by an account from the arrival of Martin Knudsen, the new lighthouse keeper:

> "The Knudsens found South Manitou pleasantly wooded with evergreens and other trees; and wild flower bloomed in their proper season. Most of the residents had gardens and grew their own vegetables. . ."
>
> The island was almost self-sustaining as far as food was concerned. Cattle, pigs and chickens were grown there for meat. The island store was at the dock and was owned and operated by William Burton. There one bought the staples which could not be produced on the island, such as tea, coffee, salt, flour, sugar, molasses and spices."

Mention might have been made of the profusion of wild strawberries and raspberries and the harvesting of maple syrup. Staying alive on the island was not difficult in those days.

Until John was fifteen, he had little concern for school. But with the arrival of Knudsen, things changed. Although the islanders had been paying school taxes, no educational facility had been made available to them. Like many others in a pioneer society, they saw little need for schooling. Most people got ahead without it. Not until 1882 did the State of Michigan pass a compulsory education act requiring children under fourteen years of age to attend school six months out of the year.

Through Knudsen's efforts, the island got its first school and teacher. Mr. Bert Green arrived from Traverse City with a six-month contract. Soon thereafter came wood-framed slates on which the children learned to write, spell, and do simple

arithmetic. Along with the slates came a supply of McGuffey readers. The readers had a distinct rural and evangelical bias. They were full of the Protestant Ethic. They taught children to admire the works of nature as a reflection of their Creator and assured them that good children would be rewarded and bad children, punished. The readers taught honesty, thrift, and kindness and encouraged frequent reading of the Bible. If John Hutzler was quiet, docile and kindly by nature, these qualities were considerably reinforced by his McGuffey reader.

In stature, John was of medium build. He was not as tall as his brother Louis who stood well over six feet. Like the rest of the Hutzlers, he had a shock of black hair and rather deep set greyish brown eyes that were shaded by heavy brows. He was not a great talker, but when he saw fit to say something, one had the feeling that half of what he said came through his eyes. When he began to speak his eyebrows suddenly lifted and one peered into sparkling animation. He liked music, and at some point learned to play the violin or, as it was frequently referred to in those days and in that area — the fiddle. His ability to play for square dances or quadrilles made him much in demand for the barn dances that were a regular part of social life on the island. The availability of hard cider produced locally also added to the enjoyment of those events.

It may have been that since John was taciturn by nature he was finally, one might almost say fatally, attracted to a girl who was his complete opposite. Miss Bertha Peth arrived on the island in 1898 from Chicago, employed as a nursemaid by John's niece, Katie Hoeft Tilton. Mrs. Tilton had come to visit the Hutzler family for the summer. Before the summer was over, the lives of John Hutzler and Bertha Peth were linked in what was to become one of the strangest continuing unions between a man and a woman.

Presumably there was a wedding on the island of the type in which the entire community took part. Shortly thereafter the young couple settled down to the routine of maintaining the farm which John had taken over from his parents. George, his older brother, had a farm for himself; and Louis, his younger brother, had entered the lighthouse service.

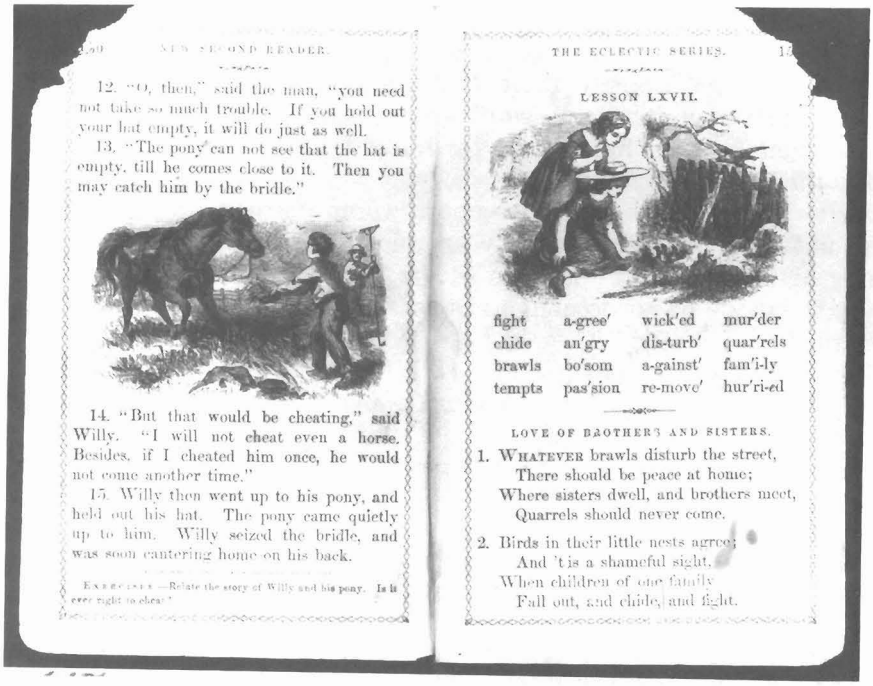
A year after the marriage a child was born whom Bertha named Stanley. The boy flourished until he was about two years old. Then one day while Bertha was entertaining her friends in the kitchen of the farmhouse, Stanley climbed over the fence where the cattle were pastured and was trampled on by a bull.

For several weeks the boy hovered between life and death. In an attempt to save his life, Bertha sailed with him to Chicago. But the doctors there could do little for him and he died shortly after of internal complications. John consoled Bertha at first and would probably have remained with her, but talk started. John's bachelor friends began telling him that the boy would never have been killed if Bertha had been watching out after him. They suggested that he divorce her. They also told him that she had had an affair with a visiting sailor. This situation led to quarrels between John and Bertha which became highly emotional. Captain Lofberg's entry in the life-saving station journal describes the effects of one of these upsets:

> *August 20, 1903:* "At noon today, John Hutzler, a resident of this Island, came down to the station and informed me that his wife had left his home as if demented and was at large in the woods somewhere in the vicinity of this station. I went out in the woods and after a half an hours search found her laying prostrate on the ground a fourth of a mile from the station. I carried her to the station and administered restoratives. The

National Park Service

Abandoned one-room schoolhouse — once the center for three R's for the island's children.



12. "O, then," said the man, "you need not take so much trouble. If you hold out your hat empty, it will do just as well.

13. "The pony can not see that the hat is empty, till he comes close to it. Then you may catch him by the bridle."

14. "But that would be cheating," said Willy. "I will not cheat even a horse. Besides, if I cheated him once, he would not come another time."

15. Willy then went up to his pony, and held out his hat. The pony came quietly up to him. Willy seized the bridle, and was soon cantering home on his back.

EXERCISE.—Relate the story of Willy and his pony. Is it ever right to cheat?

THE ECLECTIC SERIES.

LESSON LXVII.

fight	a-gree'	wick'ed	mur'der
chide	an'gry	dis-turb'	quar'rels
brawls	bo'som	a-gainst'	fam'i-ly
tempts	pas'sion	re-move'	hur'ri-ed

LOVE OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

1. WHATEVER brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home;
Where sisters dwell, and brothers meet,
Quarrels should never come.

2. Birds in their little nests agree;
And 't is a shameful sight,
When children of one family
Fall out, and chide, and fight.

John Hutzler's McGuffey's Reader opened at random. Published by Wilson Hinkle & Co., New York, in 1865. According to the publishers the sale of the readers at that time was "not equaled by that of any other School Book in the United States."

U.S.S. "Dorothea" in the meantime hove in sight and requested, by means of International code of signal the meteorological forecasts for tomorrow; that having been given, I signaled them that we had a sick person at the station and asked if they had a doctor aboard. They immediately lowered their boat and brought the surgeon ashore, who examined the woman, pronounced the symptoms as that of acute hysteria; he left some medicines and recommended that a physician be sent for at once to take care of her. A gasoline boat went to Glen Haven and brought a doctor over. I kept the woman in the station during the night as she was too ill to be removed."

Although John was at first reluctant to the idea of a divorce, he finally took action to dissolve the marriage. Bertha left again for Chicago to join her relatives. Her mother had died when Bertha was six years of age and because of ill-treatment from a stepmother, she usually stayed with her aunt. But she was unable to find peace there, and finally returned to the island.

Whether Bertha was originally eccentric or whether the tragedy and the effects of her earlier life unbalanced her is difficult to determine. She remained on the island for the rest of her life living in a house not far from the coast guard station. There she kept a small store of sorts selling items now and then to visitors. But her main income seemed to be from ginseng roots which she gathered in the woods and sold to a pharmaceutical house. It was not uncommon on a walk through the woods to be startled by the sudden appearance of a woman, her hair streaming over her face and shoulders, breaking through the underbrush. It was Bertha, harmless and garrulous as ever, not infrequently in an outlandish dress.

My last recollection of Bertha was when she was already over fifty years old. As usual, she appeared out of nowhere, this time wearing a light blue sailor suit with white piping and border. She had obviously dabbed her face with white flour for lack of a better cosmetic and painted her lips cherry red with smears that failed to follow the natural shape of her mouth. She had brought some canned chicken along with bread for Uncle John. The jar of chicken exploded several hours later!

An arrangement which John and Bertha made following the divorce was that Bertha would bake bread for him and he would cut firewood for her. And it worked out that way. John was left with peace and quiet and was able to devote full time to maintaining the farm. This he did quite successfully with hired help up to the decade of the 1920's.

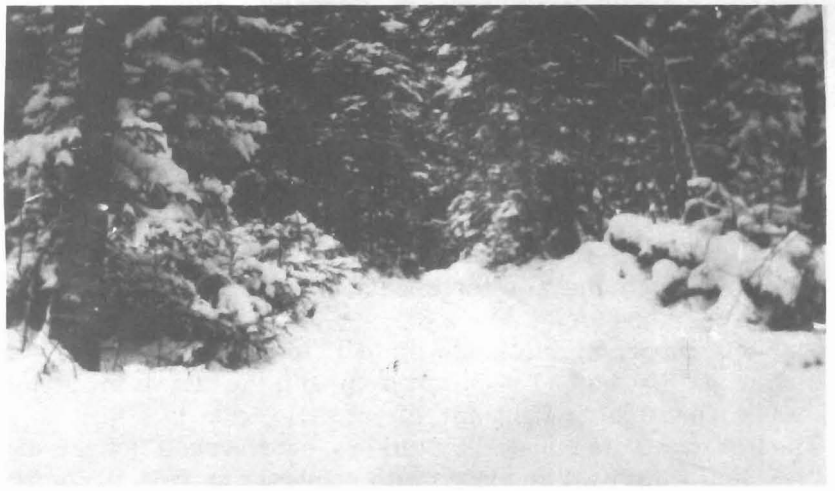
But then things began to go wrong. The dock fell into disrepair. Railroads and trucks carried produce in place of steamship and schooner. The cost of transporting fruit from his orchard rose to the point where no profit was left, and there was no market on the island. By the end of the 1920's, if not before, it was apparent that farming on the island was over. The livestock which had played so important a role on the Hutzler farm earlier had disappeared. Only a mule was left. The families, descendants of the original settlers, left one by one to be closer to schools or medical care or to a community on the mainland where they had better access to mail and supplies and means for a livelihood.

John saw all this happening but could do little to change it. Still he would not abandon the farm. At first he had been taken up with the task of maintaining it. In the end he was involved in a fight for survival. He tried to adjust to changing conditions. The livestock were replaced by turkeys that roamed the fields and woods fattening on beechnuts. Fruit was replaced with maple syrup. With this small income and what he had saved from an earlier day, he was able to get along.

The old Hutzler home shortly before it was torn down.

Stanley Hutzler, son of Bertha and John Hutzler.

John Hutzler at work. The author and his father William P. Vent visiting in 1920.



An island road after a heavy snowfall.

From time to time relatives visited him. But he had grown used to his solitude. A few cats kept him company through the long winter months. Finally he began to look with dread upon the coming of winter. Suppose he should get sick. There would be no one to look after him. For a few years he broke the monotony and the lonesomeness by visiting his sister and her family in Chicago. But even these trips began to be too much. Reaching the age of seventy, he found it easier to remain on the farm throughout the entire year. Just to keep alive was constant occupation. He cooked, cut wood, took care of the chickens. It was his daily routine. Water, too, had to be pumped and brought into the house. Gradually he went down with the island community. No one knows the exact day in August 1944 on which he died. His body was found a short distance from the house near the well. Apparently the exertion of pumping the water was his last.

Throughout the years, because of his kindly disposition, John had made many friends. Residents of the island called him "Uncle Johnnie." As many as could, came to his funeral. Services were conducted by a Lutheran minister at the gravesite in the little cemetery near the Hutzler farm. A girls' choir sang hymns, while men from the coast guard in uniform stood at attention. Bertha, too, was there wearing a coast guard cap.

And so the pioneer community that made up South Manitou Township disappeared. The island, with its hospitable harbor, that once was a bustling settlement reverted to its original state. The songs of the sailors drifting over the island no doubt linger still in the winds that blow through the tops of the trees. The wheeze of the cedar waxwings recall the sounds of creaking masts and turning wheels. The lighthouse still looks out over the water with its windows broken, desecrated by those who never knew its reassuring beacon sweeping over the waves. Inland a few trees remain in the orchards bearing fruit that falls silently in the tall orchard grass. And monarch butterflies still float on tawny wings from one milkweed flower to another.

South Manitou Rejoins Sleeping Bear

"While she slept, the Great Manitou took pity upon her and raised the two cubs above the water where she could see them."

Hardly more than ten years after John Hutzler's death, a movement was started to incorporate the island with the region around Sleeping Bear as a national park. The cub was returning to its mother. The original plan called for the inclusion of North Manitou. It was later excluded and then finally included in the act passed in 1970 which established the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

According to the records of the National Park Service, the Sleeping Bear region, including the two Manitous, was first identified in 1957 and 1958 as a possible location for a national park when the Park Service studied the Great Lakes shoreline. The study was made possible by a donation from the Mellon Foundation. Those responsible for the study stated: "by virtue of (its) outstanding natural features, this area is of possible national significance and should be given further study to determine the best plan for preservation." Additional studies became the basis for a master plan.

In 1961 legislation was introduced in Congress which would authorize the eventual purchase of 77,000 acres, most of it within Leelanau County. It set aside land for a national park, originally called Sleeping Bear National Seashore. Considerable opposition to this proposal was voiced by local residents and property owners, especially since it included large tracts east of Glen Lake. There was fear on the part of many residents who could trace their ancestry back to early pioneers that carving a national park out of this region would eventually destroy its beauty and defeat the purpose for which the park was being created. This fear has not altogether subsided.

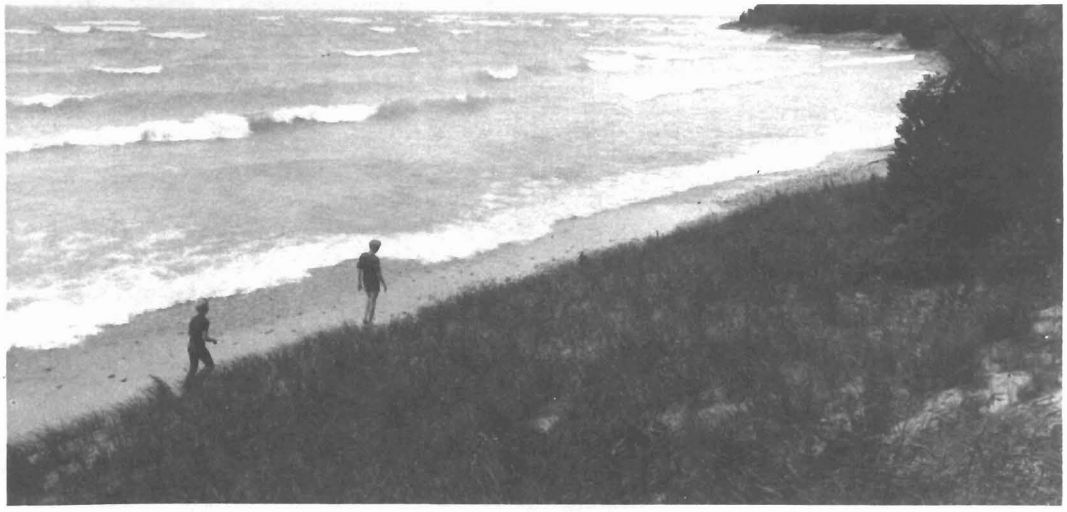
In 1963 Senator Philip A. Hart introduced on behalf of himself and Senator Patrick McNamara, both of Michigan, a bill (S. 792) which passed the Senate but was blocked by the House Interior Committee. In introducing the bill, Senator Hart told the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee:

> "Our formula for the Sleeping Bear area is essentially the same as the one this committee successfully worked out for the Cape Cod National Seashore, for the Padre Island National Seashore, and for Point Reyes National Seashore. It is not easy, but it is a goal we ought to spend every effort to achieve, because down the road somebody is going to pass judgment on what we did in 1963 when the signals were up. . . It is not just the people who now sit on the road who will pass judgment on you and me. It is a lot of people whose names and faces we will never know, but they will know about us and our response."

The hearings on S. 792 in 1963 brought forth an angry exchange between Senator Gordon Allott of Colorado and Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall. Opposition to the bill centered on the inclusion of developed resort areas around the inland lakes on the mainland where property owners had built some attractive homes and cottages. Allott clashed repeatedly with both Hart and Udall:

National Park Service

Arrival in South Manitou Harbor



National Park Service

Exploring South Manitou's scenic shores.

National Park Service

Lake Florence on South Manitou, usually called "the little lake."

National Park Service

Camping on the shores of Lake Florence.

"I am concerned as to how far we are going to go in this country with the concept that we can, under the general name of recreation, limit control of residential areas and just simply say that for recreational purposes that this is necessary. We can just as logically say (in the case of Glen Lake) folks, we are sorry; you and your grandfather may have earned this; and you may have been here for 30, 40, 50 or 200 years, but we have just decided that we are going to take it."

Udall's reply was:

"There are areas on all these lakes that are not built up. . . Homeowners who are there are really going to find that they are protected and are given values that they do not now have. Naturally, you have to have a weighing and a balancing of private interest against long-term public interest, because if this is established as a National area, we will not be establishing it merely for those people for whom it is available 100 years, 200 years from now; it becomes a permanent part of our national heritage. This is important to consider, too."

At another point, when Senator Milward Simpson of Wyoming criticized the National Park Service for trying to take land away from private owners, Udall declared with feeling:

"The one thing that I find strange, if I may say so, is that in a conservation project of this type, where we are trying to conserve something for the people, for all times, there is considered to be something outrageous about acquiring private property, even underdeveloped private property. Yet, we have a highway program and we cut great swathes across the countryside, taking all kinds of property. And no one seems to think there is anything un-American about this. I just can't distinguish between a highway project and a conservation project. If it is in the public interest, I think we ought to do whatever is in its interest."

In December 1963 a modified bill was passed by the Senate which reduced the acreage to 46,560 and changed the boundary to include a continuous length of lakeshore from Glen Arbor to the extreme southern border next to Crystal Lake. Although two bills were introduced in the House during the 88th Congress, no action was taken on them.

In 1965 a bill was again introduced in the Senate and passed. This time the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee revised it to include North Manitou. Before the House of Representatives could take action, Congress adjourned.

In 1966 the Department of the Interior urged passage of another bill to establish Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The Department said:

"The Sleeping Bear Dunes region is one of the finest relatively natural scenic and scientific areas on the Great Lakes shoreline and ranks as one of the nine most important remaining shoreline opportunities in the entire country. . . .This imposing area offers a legacy of the unspoiled Great Lakes scene to the people of our entire country, but if not protected it inevitably will be overrun with intensive development. . .South Manitou Island, a few miles offshore, has gleaming sand dunes, green forests, and inland lakes (?) in its area of about 5,300 acres. The Island's shoreline is about 13 miles."

"The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments has recommended establishment of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, and the proposal meets the criteria for national recreation areas adopted by the President's Advisory Council."

In spite of the urgings of the Department of the Interior, the bill was not passed. In 1967 an assessment was made of the economic impact of the proposed national park on the area, including Leelanau and Benzie counties. The study, which was carried out by the Institute for Community Development and Services, Michigan State University, under the direction of Donald A. Blome, indicated that economic benefits would accrue to the entire region.

Undoubtedly it was this study and the growing realization that the area was one of unique beauty and might fall into the hands of developers that brought the legislation through to final passage. On October 21, 1970, Public Law 91-479 was passed by the Congress setting aside funds for the purchase of land, including South and North Manitou Islands, to be called Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

The act as passed included approximately 60,000 acres, some 40,000 on the mainland, approximately 6,000 on South Manitou, and 15,000 on North Manitou. The park area included sixty-four miles of shoreline, thirty-one miles of which are on the mainland, twenty miles on North Manitou, and thirteen on South Manitou. The estimated cost to the Government in 1970 for the purchase of the park area was $20,000,000. An Advisory Commission of ten members was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to make recommendations for development of the area.

It is an interesting coincidence that only six years earlier, that is in 1964, the island on whose shore Margaret Fuller Ossoli lost her life, also became part of the national park system. Secretary of the Interior Udall is credited with having saved Fire Island National Seashore, only two hours from New York, from would-be developers and road builders.

To bring our history up to date, the first Park Ranger to be stationed on South Manitou was Mr. Peter LaValley, assigned to the island in the summer of 1972. The U.S. Park Service has begun work on the protection and restoration of former Government buildings still standing on the island.

According to Allen T. Edmunds, formerly of the National Park Service, the area around the islands and Sleeping Bear "had long been identified by colleges and universities of Michigan as an area of considerable geological and botanical importance. Paul W. Thompson of the Cranbrook Institute of Science had written many important scientific articles on the natural resources of the area. The Michigan Natural Areas Council and the Michigan Parks Association were among those who advocated the preservation of the natural features of the area for many years."

Among the staunch supporters of park legislation was Robert T. Hatt, Director of the Cranbrook Institute of Science. Dr. Hatt's testimony included some direct references to South Manitou Island and a short, interesting, historical sketch of the region as he and many others knew it:

> "In the years I have seen the region of Sleeping Bear change from an isolated area of small farms and lumbering to today's popular resort area. At first we came by lake steamers from Chicago. The steamer docks, the dusty roads, the small rail lines, the small bands of Indians peddling baskets, the bald eagles, the magnificent forests of old hardwoods, have all but disappeared. . .
>
> Only the islands now have a smaller population than they did forty years ago. Their farms and the Government installations of lighthouses and Coast Guard stations are things of the past. The islands attract but few summer residents and an occasional lumber crew. It was only a few years ago that some of us had to wage a campaign to save the magnificent stand of record white cedars, the so-called Valley of the Giants,

on South Manitou which were there when Columbus discovered America, first brought to attention by my survey of 1940."

It is to be hoped that visitors to the area will enjoy its scenic beauties and will help to preserve vestiges of the past that are still to be found. Abandoned structures whether private or public, old cemeteries, and isolated graves should be protected. The region is rich in local color and local history. Let us hope that these attractions may be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

Plants and Wildlife

"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately,
To front only the essential facts of life, and see if
I could not learn what it had to teach. ."

Plants

South Manitou Island has vegetation similar to that found on the mainland. Several features, however, are of more than ordinary interest. White spruce, for instance, is not seen on the mainland but is found on the island. It occurs sparsely along the stable bluffs of the shore areas. Also not found on the mainland are the walking fern and the green spleenwort.

Near the southwestern side of the island at the edge of the bluffs and the dunes is an area of approximately fifty acres of virgin forest. It is composed mainly of hardwood trees around 100 feet high. One massive elm, which now unfortunately appears to be dying, has a trunk diameter of nearly four feet. The cedars of the forest are especially imposing containing the largest known northern white cedar in the United States. Sugar maples abound on the northern half of the island and were long used for producing maple syrup. White ash is also prevalent and was used by the early islanders to make hammer and axe handles and wooden rakes. Other trees on the island include basswood, beech, and white spruce, common elder, oak, hemlock, and birch.

Of all the islands in this area of Lake Michigan, South Manitou is the only one where jack pine is found. Its distribution along the eastern side is similar to its distribution on the mainland. It lies between the beach heath and pine-oak forest. On top of the elevated plateau on the northwestern side of the island it occurs as a narrow out-fringe to the growth of balsam fir and white cedar. Nowhere else in the area does it lie so high above the level of Lake Michigan.

According to figures released by the American Forestry Association, South Manitou is the location of three of the nation's largest trees in their species. These include the white cedar on the southwest corner previously referred to, a common elder at the same location, and a maple nearby. The trees have been called champions of their kind. This title is awarded to the tree of each species rating the highest points based on the sum of the girth in inches (measured at four and one-half feet above the base) the height in feet, and one-fourth of the crown spread in feet.

Having been a fueling station for wood burning steamers, much of the original forest disappeared and what was left was cleared for farming. The dunes along the north shore are covered with juniper, grasses, and reindeer moss. Four evergreen shrubs add to the attractiveness of the island and give the air an aromatic quality. These are bearberry — the *uva ursi* identified by Margaret Fuller — oldfield common juniper, creeping juniper, and wooly beachheather. Sand cherry, common chokeberry, russet buffaloberry, and other deciduous shrubs also occur.

In various stages going back from the harbor to the maple-beech forests, three trees are better represented generally than on the mainland. These are the balsam fir, the eastern hemlock and the yellow birch.

The unusual occurrence of three species of ferns — the walking fern, spleenwort, and northern holly fern — may be due to the occasional limestone deposits. According to one naturalist, there are no other known locations in the Lower Peninsula for two of these species, namely, the walking fern *(camptosorus rhizophyllas)* and the green spleenwort *(asplenium viride)*. The only other place in

the region for the walking fern is in the Alpena area. The walking fern on South Manitou completely covers entire sections of rotting logs.

Ginseng (panax quinquefolium) can be found on the island, if like Bertha Peth, one knows where to look for it. The plant is usually found in the deep shade of forests and covered hillsides. Ginseng is exported from America to China where it is much in demand for general medicinal purposes and as an aphrodisiac. During the Korean war, the Russians seized the entire Korean supply valued at 120 million dollars.

Wildlife

Because of the isolation of the island from the mainland, it has undoubtedly always had less in the way of wildlife than did the mainland. Thurlow Weed made note of this lack of wildlife when he stopped off at the Manitous in 1847. He even doubted the presence of mosquitoes. Undoubtedly one of the reasons the Indians may not have used the Manitous was because of the lack of animal life.

The results of various studies indicate three species of amphibia - the red-backed salamander, American toad, and the leopard frog. Four species of reptiles include the snapping turtle, painted turtle, garter snake, and ring-necked snake. The latter variety of snake is seldom seen and is found under old logs. In addition there are seventy-six species of birds, and nine species of native mammals. Two of the mammals — the fox squirrel and the muskrat — were introduced to the island by man. The other mammals include the raccoon, the red squirrel, the red fox, the eastern chipmunk, the deer mouse, the snowshoe hare, and the cottontail. The cottontail is thought to have arrived from the mainland as late as 1925.

Among the large variety of birds to be found on the island are the cedar waxwing, barn and bank swallows, horned lark, flicker, and the piping plover. In the past a rookery of crows could be found in the deserted forest on the northwest side of the island. Passenger pigeons, long extinct, also nested on the island, and an occasional family of eagles built their aerie. Chicken hawks were the bane of the local farmers.

The extensive woods or cover on the island probably accounts for the large number of birds. One does not find many of them, however, unless one penetrates the thickets with a quiet tread. Among the most frequently seen are the kingbird, tree and barn swallows, willow thrush, oven-bird, redstart, red-wing, and the song sparrow. A complete list of birds reported by the Cranbrook Institute study follows:

Lesser Loon
Double-breasted Cormorant
Great Blue Heron
American Merganser
Red-breasted Merganser
Turkey Vulture
Cooper's Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Broadwinged Hawk
Northern Bald Eagle
Belted Piping Plover
Killdeer
American Woodcock
Spotted Sandpiper
Lesser Yellow-legs
Herring Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Caspian Tern
Black-billed Cuckoo
Eastern Whip-poor-will
Eastern Nighthawk
Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Kingfisher

National Park Service

Giant white cedar in the virgin forest.

National Park Service

Herring Gulls on South Manitou

Red-headed Woodpecker
Eastern Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Downy Woodpecker
Eastern Kingbird
Northern Crested Flycatcher
Least Flycatcher
Eastern Wood Pewee
Tree Swallow
Bank Swallow
Barn Swallow
Purple Martin
Northern Bluejay
Eastern Crow
Black-capped Chickadee
White-breasted Nuthatch
Eastern House Wren
Short-billed Marsh Wren
Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Eastern Robin
Willow Thrush
Eastern Bluebird
Cedar Waxwing
Starling
Red-eyed Vireo
Nashville Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Ovenbird
Northern Yellow-throat
American Redstart
English Sparrow
Bobolink
Eastern Meadowlark
Eastern Red-wing
Baltimore Oriole
Bronzed Grackle
Eastern Cowbird
Scarlet Tanager
Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Northern Pine Siskin
Eastern Goldfinch
Red-eyed Towhee
Eastern Grasshopper Sparrow
Eastern Vesper Sparrow
Eastern Chipping Sparrow
Mississippi Song Sparrow

Of special interest on South Manitou is Gull Point on the north end of the harbor. This point was so named because it is one of the largest nesting places of Herring Gulls to be found on the Great Lakes. Approximately 1,500 gull nests were reported there as late as 1959. It is quite likely that the number of nests has diminished since then because of the increased use of pesticides.

Epilogue

And so I returned to the island after some thirty-five years. I had found answers not only to the questions that arose in my mind on that day when I lay in the orchard but in fact answers to many, many more. In the meantime changes had taken place. Uncle John was gone, the old house had disappeared, the great barn had burned down taking with it wagons and sleighs and all the handmade wooden tools — and only a few piles remained of Burton's wharf. It had almost disappeared like the hull of the wrecked schooner *Lomie Burton.*

The Coast Guard houses were deserted. And the lighthouse, although as beautiful as ever from a distance, showed on closer inspection the effects of desertion and neglect. The sea gulls were there too but not so many and not so raucous as before. I visited the cemetery and found a profusion of rambling roses threatened by encroaching sumac. Lilies of the valley, once clustered on the graves, wandered off in all directions.

I walked on until I came to the entrance of the old farm, expecting along the way to find the half-hidden road that led to the orchard where my grandfather lay buried. I could not seem to find it. I retraced my steps and after several attempts finally succeeded. But road it was no more. It was half-covered with underbrush and led me in false directions. Finally, I located what appeared to be a clearing. It was the orchard. But how it had changed!

Most of the fruit trees were mere blackened hulks. Towering above them and cutting them off from any light were myriads of maple saplings. The gaunt branches of the fruit trees, once laden with apples and cherries, now stretched barren beneath the glowing green of the maples. Some of the trees had toppled over. They no longer stood affably around the grave. Out of the deep grass nearby a woodcock flew up. I know not which of us was more startled. Otherwise the orchard was quiet. Blackeyed susans basked in the sun in those few places where the sun's rays were able to penetrate. The dimensions of the orchard could only be determined by groping through the underbrush and peering through the dense shade. I gradually realized that the maple saplings fighting each other for light, had, in their own struggle, choked the entire orchard to death!

Suddenly I spied the grave. It, too, was surrounded by trees. The small fence that had been built to protect it had given way. Some of the saplings were inside the fence. Taking an axe I had brought with me, I cut them down until the sun shone in again upon the grave. Then I gathered buckets of earth and built up the mound. On it I planted flowers and a flag. Here lay a man who was an American not by accident but by choice.

In quiet contemplation it occurred to me that throughout the years in seeking answers to all those questions that originally intrigued me, I had never asked myself the most important question of all — What sense did George Hutzler's life make? What was the use of his struggle? The community he had helped to found had disappeared. The land he had laid claim to and which he wrested from nature was now going back to the Government and rapidly back to nature. Those for whom he had risked his life and sacrificed the lives of two of his children knew little of his risks or of his sacrifice. And the affluent generation, used to ease and comfort and living on the endeavors of others, would it ever have a true appreciation for the

struggles of the man buried at this spot? I doubted it. I doubted that positive answers could be found for any of these questions.

The thought occurred to me that conditions in the great metropolitan centers of the country might some day become so bad that their inhabitants would once more seek out rural spots such as this island or pioneer communities on the mainland where grandfathers and great-grandfathers would be discovered again. And people in the Midwest would once more know what their forebears had gone through to develop the great heartland of America. But where would they find the monuments to the past — those buildings and edifices that would cause them to ponder on bygone days and the deeds of their ancestors?

I felt strangely uneasy. I had recently seen a brochure encouraging people to visit Williamsburg. The pictures in the brochure revealed interiors of elegantly furnished homes. Portraits hung on panelled walls, and richly upholstered furniture was enhanced by oriental rugs. These were not the furnishings of George Hutzler's house. And there was no separate cook-house for the servants! There was no Duke of Gloucester Street on the island or on the neighboring shores of the mainland. Main Street, Front Street, and High Street were more likely. The brochure also read: "Feel the quietness, the serenity, and the ghosts of the past." Why all the way to Williamsburg? And why should the children of the Midwest discover their heritage in the plantation society of the Southeast? I could find no answers to these questions either.

To be sure, monuments left by pioneers in the Midwest are not so fortunate as those in the East. There are few philanthropists to preserve or restore them. Nevertheless, the structures that still remain should be studied. Their axe-hewn timbers, skillfully cut, massive blocks for cabin or barn, reveal sinew and stamina, determination and perseverance, willingness to cope with hardship and privation. This was the spirit that built the Midwest. If it produced roughness of character and for a time a society lacking in sophistication, it brought forth a brand of social democracy largely unknown to the East.

George Hutzler, of course, was unaware of all this. He knew only that where once no foot had trod, now could be found a flourishing farm. He took satisfaction in the thought that he had helped to establish a new community that would undoubtedly continue after his death and provide a livelihood for his children and their descendants. For sure, he was happy in the thought of his own accomplishments. . .

With a last look at the grave, I turned and threaded my way out of the orchard.

> *"For we know that when a nation goes down and never comes back, when a society or a civilization perishes, one condition can always be found. They forgot from whence they came. They lost sight of what brought them along."*
>
> *Carl Sandburg*

National Park Service

Sunset on Lake Michigan from the western bluffs of South Manitou Island

ADDENDA

The Hutzler Family

Georg Johann Hutzler	1814	1888
Margaretha, nee Ziegler	1820	1909
Elizabeth	1841	1872
Margaret	1843	1924
Georg	1845	1854
Anna	1849	1939
Johann	1852	1853
George	1855	1909
Maria	1857	1859
Katherine	1860	1936
John	1865	1944
Louis	1867	1947
Louisa	1868	1954

Postmasters and Postmistresses of the South Manitou Post Office

Richard Kitchen	—	September 26, 1879
William Kitchen	—	March 6, 1888
Thomas I. Foster	—	October 3, 1889
Cora Kelderhouse	—	August 1, 1907
Leonard Erickson	—	October 23, 1907
Hattie Thompson	—	July 29, 1910
Selma Hutzler	—	May 31, 1913
Blanche Lewis	—	October 15, 1921 (actg.)
Myrtle Haas	—	June 29, 1922 (actg.)
Lillian L. Burdick	—	June 18, 1923
Lottie Tobin	—	February 3, 1928

Keepers of South Manitou Lighthouse and Assistant Keepers

William N. Burton	September 28, 1840	(K)
Bael Ward	May 30, 1843	(K)
George Clarke	August 6, 1845	(K)
Benjamin Ross	June 27, 1849	(K)
Alonzo Styfield	September 9, 1853	(K)
Patrick Glenn	June 27, 1859	(K)
P. W. Kirtland	July 17, 1861	(K)
Aaron A. Sheridan	July 21, 1866	(K)
Mrs. A. Sheridan	September 9, 1872	(1)
Jeremiah Becker	May 27, 1875	(2)
Lyman Sheridan	April 16, 1878	(K)
Alexander Thompson	April 22, 1878	(1)
Martin Knudsen	June 2, 1882	(K)
Nelson Knudsen	April 27, 1883	(1)
James Armstrong	April 15, 1885	(2)
James Armstrong	August 16, 1887	(1)
S. H. Roosa	November 3, 1887	(2)
John Gallagher	August 18, 1888	(2)
Nelson Knudsen	September 13, 1889	(K)
John Gallagher	September 13, 1889	(1)
Thomas R. Kitchen	November 4, 1889	(2)
Thomas R. Kitchen	August 6, 1890	(1)
Thomas J. Armstrong	August 28, 1890	(2)
George Hendryx	April 28, 1891	(2)
Thomas R. Kitchen	January 22, 1892	(K)
Benjamin E. Arnold	February 25, 1892	(2)
Wesley Smith	March 9, 1892	(1)
Thomas J. Armstrong	August 8, 1892	(K)
Louis Hutzler	October 25, 1892	(2)
Phil Sheridan	November 5, 1892	(1)
Louis Hutzler	November 13, 1895	(1)
Bertrand C. Green	March 9, 1896	(2)
Bertrand C. Green	September 12, 1898	(1)
Guy Stephenson	November 29, 1898	(2)
Guy M. Blake	October 26, 1900	(2)
James P. Burdick	September 9, 1901	(2)
James P. Burdick	December 1, 1902	(1)
William H. Burdick	November 12, 1902	(2)
William H. Burdick	April 1, 1903	(1)
William Fraser	April 1, 1903	(2)
Ernest Hutzler	April 10, 1904	(2)
John Fitzgerald	June 20, 1904	(2)
William P. Larson	November 10, 1904	(K)
James P. Burdick	July 1, 1908	(K)

Robert A. McKellop	July 1, 1908	(2)
Ernest Hutzler	March 14, 1912	(1)
John K. Tobin	March 15, 1912	(2)
Ernest Hutzler	February 1, 1928	(K)
John K. Tobin	September 1, 1935	(K)

Keepers of the Life-Saving/Coast Guard Station on South Manitou

Name	*Began Duty*
Gus B. Lofberg	February 22, 1902
Jacob Van Weelden	November 26, 1903
Eli E. Pugh	February 9, 1907
Allen A. Kent	August 25, 1910*
Oscar Smith	July 25, 1916
Abram Wessel	February 25, 1918
George Kelderhouse	January 29, 1919 (actg)
Oscar Smith	June 3, 1919
William Fisher	June 1, 1924
Andrew Fisher	July 5, 1928
George L. Burrill	November 19, 1932
Harrison Haas	June 29, 1934
Fred Wendel Jr.	November 3, 1937
Julius Wheeler	March 25, 1940
Raymond Chapman	June 18, 1941
John D. Kirby	October 20, 1941
*Martin Furst	July 8, to December 11, 1911 (actg)

Logbook Entries — South Manitou Life-Saving Station

August 15, 1907:

Weather: Cloudy, brisk wind from the South, changing high to Northwest.

"At a few minutes after three o'clock this a.m., the schooner *Rosa Bell* entered the harbor and came to anchor and in doing so collided with the schooner *Petrel* baying at anchor in the harbor, and carried away the *Petrel's* head gear and forced her on the beach doing some damage to the *Rosa Bell.* The watchman on duty in the watch tower reported the casualty. The longbranch surfboat was launched and arrived along side at 4:15 a.m. and run out kedge anchors and hove the schooners apart and hove the Petrel off the beach. At 1 p.m. the *Petrel* was discovered to be leaking. The crew again boarded her pumped her out and assisted in stopping the leak. Returning to the station at 4 p.m. For two days the crew helped with repairs and pumping out water. The *Petrel* left the harbor on the 17th at 2 p.m. in tow of the steamer *Susie Chapman* for Milwaukee where it will go into dry dock as she was still leaking badly.

September 10, 1907:

"In attempting to enter the harbor in a fierce thunderstorm, at 10:45 p.m. tonight, the Schooner *H. D. Moore* of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, bound for Harbor Springs, Michigan, to Port Washington, Wis., with a cargo of hardwood lumber, stranded on the N.E. point of the Island and showed distress signals to which the crew promptly responded with the Beebe McLellan surfboat and landed the crew of four men at the station."

April 21, 1908:

"I reported to the Captain of the Revenue Cutter *Tuscaloosa* informing them of the sunken hull of the wrecked schooner *Margaret Dall* which now lies in 18 feet of water in South Manitou harbor and is an obstruction to navigation."

February 17, 1910:

"South Manitou Island harbor and Manitou Passage froze over last night."

June 10, 1910: (Drowning of Thomas Thompson)

"At about 10:30 this a.m. the surfman on duty in watchtower reported that he heard screaming and from the movements of a woman on the beach two miles north of the station believed that there was something wrong there. The crew were in the surfboat at the time the alarm was given and pulled to the scene immediately.

Upon arriving learned from the woman who was on the beach that her three-year-old son had fallen overboard from a skiff about one hundred yards from shore where the water was twenty feet deep and that her husband had jumped overboard to rescue the child and was swimming ashore with him when he sank.

At about the same time they disappeared from sight, the skiff drifted ashore. The wife took it and pulled to where she had last seen her husband and son struggling in the water. Caught the child as he rose to the surface, took him into the boat and pulled ashore.

At about this time the station crew arrived and two of the crew immediately commenced resuscitating the child while the rest of the crew grappled for the body of the father. After working the artifical respiration for twenty minutes, the child was restored to natural breathing.

After about forty-five minutes, the body of the father was recovered and the artificial respiration was worked for one hour and twenty minutes, when a physician arrived and pronounced life extinct and the cause of death, the bursting of a blood vessel."

September 8, 1910:

At about 8:15 A.M. got telephone message from North Manitou Island lighthouse, "that there was a schooner on the rocks on the west side, abreast of South Island's north point," Wind was blowing fresh from the S.W. Launched Beebe McLellan Surfboat and under sail went to north island, found the wreck and boarded her, shortly after the North Island life-saving crew boat arrived. We see we could not save the schooner without the aid of a tugboat with a very long line as there was over one-half mile of rocks outside the wreck, with four to six feet of water over them. So the North Island crew returned to their station to telegraph for the Revenue Cutter to come and bring a very long line. The sea was running down fast, and about noon, we loaded the 1200 pound anchor into the yawl boat and with the vessel's hawser attached carried it out the length of the hawser (300 ft) capsized the boat, went back aboard and heaved on it as fast as we could get a little of it in, all afternoon. About 7 o'clock P.M. the wind whipped around to the N.W. and blowed a gale, made a big sea in a very short time, then we kept working at the windlass, as we thought if the sea got big enough the vessel could be heaved off the same way she went on.

About 10 o'clock everything begin to look pretty bad. Thought we better get ashore before she went out from under us, as it was nearly a quarter mile to land and very rocky. So we left the wreck, landing six men and their effects. Hid their stuff in the woods and walked about three miles to the lighthouse on North Island, where we was camped down for the night in the fog signal, and a few in the house on the floor, arriving here about 11:30 P.M. wet and cold, still blowing a gale from the northward. Name of the schooner was the *J. B. Newland* of Racine, bound for Sturgeon Bay from Milwaukee. Got caught in a fog bank with plenty wind and sea carried out of her course.

September 9, 1910:

Returned aboard of wreck at 9:00 A.M. and commenced to strip her of all sail and running gear. At noon sea went down. Loaded surfboat with sail and returned to South Manitou Harbor and to station. Got Long Branch surfboat and in tow of a gasoline launch belonging to the surfmen, returned to wreck, loaded up with sail

and gear, the three boats, and returned to South Manitou dock where the Captain had engaged a warehouse. Unloaded and got to station at 8:30 P.M. Six sailors sheltered at station. Life boat could not be used owing to one-half mile of rock and boulder outside of wreck, many places only four feet of water.

Wreck of the S. S. Bethlehem

The S. S. *Bethlehem* was built in 1888 in Cleveland. She had a length of almost 300 feet, engines capable of 1,500 horsepower, and weighed 2633 gross tons. Although built to carry passengers, she frequently carried freight when the summer months were over.

On the night of September 22, 1910, she steamed out of Milwaukee, loaded with flour and general merchandise and a crew of twenty-six men. With Buffalo as her destination, she headed across the lake in the direction of the Manitous. Once out of sight of Milwaukee, the captain turned the wheel over to the first mate and went to bed. For a while things went well. But at midnight a fresh wind from the south arose driving heavy clouds before it. A few hours later, as the Bethlehem approached the Manitou Passage, the wind suddenly switched to the north bringing down great sheets of rain and a haze that greatly reduced visibility. The first mate was still at the wheel at 3:40 A.M. as the *Bethlehem* neared the island. Blinded by the rain and darkness and unsure of his course, the mate decided to call for the captain to help him verify his directions. But it was already too late.

Before the captain could take the wheel, there was a sudden horrible jolt. Crates and crew fell over each other in the tumult that followed. The S. S. *Bethlehem* scraped her bottom over the rocks on the southwest side of the island and came to a halt about 600 yards from shore. The captain tried to release the ship by throwing her into reverse. But it was to no avail. She would not budge.

Unfortunately, the distressed steamer could not be seen from the life-saving station. At 7:00 A.M. the captain of the life-saving station at Sleeping Bear telephoned that he thought he saw a four-masted schooner stranded on the west side of the island. A surfman was immediately dispatched to the lighthouse tower. Minutes later the mate of the *Bethlehem* accompanied by two sailors, arrived at Sandy Point. They reported the disaster and asked Captain Kent to send a message to the ship's owners in Buffalo. At noon the word came from Buffalo to lighten the ship. Kent sailed to the wreck with the mate who delivered the instructions to the captain. Both Kent and the captain then returned to the station to make necessary arrangements. Fifty men were requested from the mainland to handle the transfer of the cargo, also provisions for 300 meals. Kent then returned the captain to his ship, arriving there at 9:30 P.M. By this time a gale was again blowing and heavy seas running. Kent stood by until the morning of the 24th in case he was needed.

At 6:00 A.M., with seas unabated, Kent and the captain launched one of the ship's boats and rowed ashore. They then walked some five miles to the station. This was quicker than trying to return the entire way to the station by boat. With a gale now blowing from the southwest, Kent sailed for Glen Haven to engage the fifty men and return with them to the island. But high seas prevented him from bringing them back. At 7:30 P.M. Kent again reached South Manitou. He immediately sent a patrol along shore with instructions to stay in sight of the wreck. At 11:40 P.M. the patrol returned reporting that the *Bethlehem* was blowing her whistle and that there was a large fire burning on the boat forward. By now the wind had shifted to the northwest. Captain Kent left within ten minutes making poor time in the heavy sea "as the propellor was out of the water half the time." He arrived at the wreck at 2:00 A.M. of the 25th and pulled along side, the "sea running mountain high." The

Bethlehem had broken in two at its number 3 and 5 hatches. With the sea washing over the boat, Captain Kent and his surfmen took off the *Bethlehem's* crew, got into deep water again, and arrived with all hands at South Manitou harbor at 4:00 A.M.

Once at the station, they tried to send this latest information to the mainland but discovered that the telephone cable was out of order. At 10:00 A.M. of the 25th, Captain Kent left for Glen Haven to deliver messages for the crew of the wrecked steamer and to bring back men and provisions. On arriving he met Mr. St. Clair, the insurance agent, who had orders to take charge of the wreck. St. Clair countermanded the order for men and provisions until he had surveyed the wreck. There was nothing for Kent to do but to return to the ship through the churning Manitou Passage. Once St. Clair saw the wreck, he agreed men and provisions were needed.

For the better part of seven days, men and boats worked at the wreck of the *Bethlehem* to save as much of its cargo as possible. The revenue cutter *Tuscarora*, the schooner *Lilly E*, the wrecking steamer *Manistique*, and the steamer *Saranac*, all struggled in high seas to salvage what they could. Captain Kent and his crew were in constant demand for trips to Glen Haven or to the foundered steamer.

In the midst of these operations, as serious and as harrowing as they were, "the head officials of the Lehigh Valley Railroad who had arrived on the *Saranac* to look at the wreck. . .said they wanted to get a picture of the *Bethlehem* with a sea on. I told them they could not get any pictures as they would not keep their camera dry, too much water flying. The traffic manager joined in with them and said if I would just take them outside a short ways they would want to come back soon. As the Superintendent wanted to see how it seemed to have a ride in a life boat, and would see that I did not get into any trouble on their account. So I took them out with the life boat under sail, and power, got outside of the lee of the island, seas begin to board us pretty regular, all was wet as drowned rats. Still no one proposed to go back, finally a big one came along and boarded us right when we came out of it. There was some of them setting down in the bottom of the boat in water up to their hips. All wanted to go back. Then arriving at the *Saranac* at about 3:00 P.M. where they left us. They threw a box of cigars into the boat as we left for the station, thanking us, saying that it was the best time they ever had."

On October 1, at 4:00 P.M., the *Saranac* sailed off, loaded with about one-third of the *Bethlehem's* cargo. It was expected that the insurance company would pay for the rest. The following day, in high seas, the wrecking steamer *Manistique* struck bottom at 11:00 P.M. and broke adrift, leaving its captain and nine men stranded aboard the wreck. At 5:00 A.M. on October 3, Kent and his crew took the men off the wreck for the last time and headed for South Manitou harbor.

> "Seas as big as I ever see. Tried to make to the S.E. under sail and power to get around island, but could not make it, so went to westward of the island, arriving into harbor at about 8:00 A.M. One of the worst nights I ever put in. Burnt much gasoline. At about 6:00 A.M. some complaining among the men. They were wet and cold, getting all they wanted of it. So was I. Three men sick. Turned in until 4:00 P.M. as we were tired out."

After eleven days and nights of constant exertion, it would appear that this was a well earned rest for Captain Kent and his courageous surfmen. Thus, without loss of life, but with some loss of cargo, the last trip of the S. S. *Bethlehem* came to an end.

The Coast Guard Station at South Manitou
(Revisited after Forty Years)

The remodeling has changed the Coast Guard Station in many ways. It has been raised to accomodate a full basement. To enter the south door, one goes up several steps and through a door to the first floor level. It's so different from the old entrance, which was up three steps and into a short hallway where the large woodbox stood. The staircase, with its pretty and solid bannister, is really the only thing left as it was in those long ago days.

The kitchen or mess room was barren with plaster fallen on the floor. I could visualize the iron range with the woodbox filled with split maple by its side. And there was a cupboard by the sink with the pitcher pump. Gone was the big oak table that eight men could gather around to eat their meals, and a small mirror hung on the window divider near the table where we used to shave. The old coffee grinder was fastened to the east wall above the counter and it used to make a lot of noise when Crain ground the morning coffee. These things are remembered.

The crew's quarters adjoining the kitchen was equally bare and lonesome looking. No round table by the east window where we wrote letters, played checkers, or just sat and looked out over the lake towards Pyramid Point. And there was a large wood burning stove with a top lid where we burned large chunks of Willie Beck's maple and beech on cold winter nights. Behind the stove was a mantle of varnished pine with hooks where we often dried socks and clothing; and on rainy or snowy evenings we hung Old Glory so it would be dry for muster in the morning. And there was a small table in the S.E. corner that held our little record player with its neighboring pile of often played records. Such a pleasant room, which was often filled with laughter and the fragrance of good tobacco!

The poplar trees which were small, those years ago, are now tall and slender, over-shadowing the Station proper. The old woodshed has long been torn down or moved and weeds and grass now cover its former site. Towards Warner's house and our old lookout on the Point stretches a cement walk, which replaced the plank walk. And no more stands the big woodpile, where the crew used to stack up the year's wood supply in winter to the tune of Willie Beck's whining buzz saw. All has been changed during these last forty years, but how wonderful is one's memory. These memories can be re-lived and those other days seem very near. Some were sad, but most often they were happy and filled with the hopes and vitality of youth. . . .

Gerald E. Crowner
September, 1968

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