

Introducing Michigan's Past

AN OVERVIEW FOR TEACHERS



by *Michigan History* magazine

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COVER:

Michigan history is as diverse as the people who made it. Featured on the cover illustration, in chronological order from right to left, are a Paleo-Indian, a French voyageur, a British army officer, a pioneer family, abolitionist Sojourner Truth, Civil War general Alpheus S. Williams, a logger, an iron miner, Henry Ford, a 1930s UAW activist, Rosie the Riveter, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Illustration by Patrick Reed.

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Dear Educator,

Prepared by the staff of *Michigan History* magazine, *Understanding Michigan's Past* provides a brief overview of the state's history. This booklet is designed specifically for fourth-grade teachers who are introducing their students to Michigan history.

The contents of this booklet focus on the key elements of Michigan's past that the Department of Education and Treasury, in conjunction with the Michigan Historical Center, believe are central to a fourth grader's understanding of Michigan history. Eleven broader "topics" are introduced with a short overview. Each is followed by three "examples" that enhance a more complete understanding of the topic. These aspects of Michigan history can be aligned with the Michigan Social Studies Studies Framework outlined by the Department of Education to better prepare students for their fifth-grade MEAP testing on Michigan history. For ideas on this alignment, please see www.michiganepic.org/historythemes/.

In addition to this booklet, the staff of *Michigan History* magazine is introducing two other publications that will help you teach Michigan history. Beginning in August 2001 all fourth graders will receive the quarterly magazine, *Michigan History for Kids*, and the monthly newsletter, *The Mitten*. These publications will be supplemented with teacher's lessons and offered to teachers at no cost.

We look forward to exploring Michigan's intriguing past together.

Roger L. Rosentreter, editor
Michigan History magazine

Prehistoric and Historic Indian culture

BEGINNINGS TO 1790

WHEN THE FRENCH arrived in the upper Great Lakes in the mid-seventeenth century, they discovered nine Indian tribes that totaled an estimated 100,000 people. The largest was the Huron, which lived in the region between Lakes Erie, Ontario and Huron. Tribes living in present-day Michigan included the Ojibway, the Odawa and the Potawatomi. Other tribes living in the area included the Menominee, the Sac (also Sauk), the Fox, the Winnabago and the Miami.

Each tribe had distinct cultural differences, but in general, they shared three beliefs: 1) Spirits were more powerful than men; 2) Nature—the land, animals and plants—belonged to everyone; and 3) No one had the right to run another person's life.

Everyone living in an Indian village worked. Women did most of the chores, including tanning animal skins, weaving fishnets, chopping wood, planting and harvesting crops and cooking. Men and boys, who did the hunting, made the bows and arrows, traps, wooden tools and canoes. The bark canoe—one of several items Europeans borrowed from the Native Americans—was a remarkable invention. The canoe was durable, waterproof and light-weight, which meant it could be easily carried overland when it was necessary to portage.

Unlike Native Americans who lived on the Great Plains, Michigan Indians did not live in tepees. Instead, they lived in dome-shaped wigwams. Saplings were stuck into the ground and tied together to create a frame. Sheets of bark taken from large trees were placed over the saplings. When a family moved to a new place, they rolled up the bark covering and took it with them. They left the sapling framework behind.

Michigan Indians obtained food in many ways. From the forests, lakes and streams they gathered berries, nuts and wild rice. They grew corn, beans and squash in gardens. They also hunted. Men and boys used traps and snares, as well as bows and arrows, to take bear, moose, deer, wolf and fox.

Michigan Indians were not as warlike as other Native Americans. When they did fight, it was because another group had moved too close to their territory. They also fought to avenge a wrong done to one of them by someone from another village or tribe.

The arrival of the Europeans in the mid-seventeenth century, which ushered in the Historic Period, greatly affected the lives of Native Americans. As the fur trade grew, Native Americans began trading animal skins for guns, knives, hatchets, cloth blankets, metal cooking pots and liquor. Finding these goods superior to those they had used earlier, Native Americans grew dependent upon the Europeans.

The Europeans also brought disease. Exposed to measles, smallpox and tuberculosis for the first time, many Indians died.

Paleo-Indians at the Michigan Historical Museum



HOPEWELL

One of the most culturally distinct groups of Native Americans to live in the Great Lakes area were the Hopewell. The Hopewell made great use of rare, raw materials for the manufacture of tools, weapons, ornaments and objects used in religious ceremonies. Noted for their extensive trading network, the Hopewell traded Great Lakes copper objects as far south as the Gulf of Mexico. One of the largest Hopewellian ceremonial centers in the upper Great Lakes was at present-day Grand Rapids, Michigan. One distinct element of the Hopewell culture were burial mounds. One of the best-known Hopewellian burial centers in the nation is Norton Mounds in Grand Rapids. Mounds covered rectangular burial pits where the departed were buried with projectile points, pottery and copper items. By A.D. 400 most of the unique aspects of the Hopewell culture had faded away.



Arrowhead at the Michigan Historical Museum

ANISHABEK (THREE FIRES)

The three tribes most commonly associated with Michigan are the Ojibway (Chippewa), the Odawa (Ottawa) and the Potawatomi. Closely related in language and culture, these three tribes interacted with each other like members of a family. The Odawa and Potawatomi called the Ojibway “older brothers.” The Odawa were next born and the Potawatomi were the “younger brothers.” Together, these three tribes formed the Three Fires Confederacy, a loose-knit alliance that promoted their mutual interests.

The French called the older brothers of the Three Fires the Ojibway. Translated, this means “to roast ‘til puckered up,” describing the unique style of moccasin these people wore. The Ojibway, a tribe of approximately thirty thousand people, lived along the southern shore of Lake Superior. They maintained a large fishing village at the rapids of the St. Mary’s River (present-day Sault Ste. Marie) and were renowned hunters and fishermen.

The Odawa, a name that means to “to trade,” were skillful intertribal traders. The Odawa also excelled in making bark canoes, which enabled them to trade all over North America. In 1650 the Iroquois pushed the Odawa from Canada to the Straits of Mackinac. They gradually settled along the shores of Lake Michigan in the Lower Peninsula. When the French arrived in the Great Lakes the Odawa had approximately three thousand people.

The Potawatomi, whose four thousand members lived in southern Wisconsin when the Europeans arrived, moved around the southern tip of Lake Michigan and settled in northern Indiana and southwestern Michigan in the early seventeenth century. Called “the people of the place of the fire,” the Potawatomi are considered among Michigan’s earliest farmers. The temperate regions of southern Michigan allowed the Potawatomi to produce squash, corn, melons, beans and even tobacco. As a result, their villages were larger and more permanent than those of the Ojibway and Odawa.

HURON

Culturally the Huron Indians were—by European standards—the most advanced Native Americans living in the Great Lakes. A confederation of four Indian tribes of the Iroquoian family, the Huron lived in the Georgian Bay area of present-day Ontario, Canada. When the French arrived in the early seventeenth century, the Huron were at the height of their power. The Huron population varies, but as many as thirty thousand people lived in about twenty-five villages. The Huron were sedentary, living in large villages with a high degree of community and tribal organization. One of the most farm-oriented Great Lakes tribes, the Huron supplemented their diets by fishing and hunting. As French missionaries began establishing missions among the Huron they also brought disease, especially smallpox, which greatly reduced the tribe. Raids from the Iroquoian tribes in New York destroyed the Huron. Survivors were adopted into other tribes or became refugees.

2 The French in Michigan

1630-1763



Statue of Madame Cadillac at Marygrove College

THE FRENCH ARRIVED in the Great Lakes looking for a way to China, but what they found were furs and Native Americans. The earliest French presence in the Great Lakes occurred when Samuel de Champlain explored the Georgian Bay area of eastern Lake Huron. One of Champlain's disciples, Etienne Brulé was the first European to reach Lake Superior in 1622. Twelve years later, Jean Nicolet arrived in Lake Michigan.

As it became clear that the Great Lakes did not provide a water route to Asia, the French extended their colonial empire by exploiting the wealth they discovered in the fur trade and by bringing Christianity to Native Americans. For more than 150 years the French worked out a mutually agreeable relationship with the Native Americans. They accommodated their customs, learned their languages and intermarried.

Beginning in the 1660s, the French strengthened their hold on the Great Lakes by establishing outposts at Sault Ste. Marie, the Straits of Mackinac, Fort Miami (present-day St. Joseph), Fort St. Joseph (present-day Niles) and Detroit. The French who explored and settled in Michigan include the famous—Jesuit missionary Father Jacques Marquette, Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle and Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac—and the not so famous, the *coureurs de bois* (woods runners) and *voyageurs* (independent fur trappers) who were the backbone of the fur trade.

Committed to converting Native Americans to Catholicism, the Jesuits were particularly challenged by many Native Americans who did not like being told that their beliefs were false. In 1668 the Jesuits built their first mission in Michigan at Sault Ste. Marie. Three years later, Sault Ste. Marie was the backdrop for a colorful affair known as the Pageant of the Sault. On June 14, 1671, Simon François, de St. Lussion, an emissary from the French king, proclaimed that the interior of North America belonged to France.

One of the most notable French explorers was Robert La Salle, who implemented a plan that established forts at strategic places between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. To further expand the fur trade, La Salle also built the *Griffon*, the first sailing vessel on the Great Lakes. During the summer of 1679 the *Griffon* sailed from Niagara to present-day Green Bay, Wisconsin, where it took on a load of furs. On the return trip the 45-ton boat disappeared. The boat's disappearance led La Salle to leave Fort Miami (his fort at the mouth of the St. Joseph River) in March 1680 and head east. Two days after leaving Fort Miami, La Salle recorded, "We continued our march through the woods, which was so interlaced with thorns and bram-

bles that . . . our clothes were all torn and our faces so covered with blood that we hardly knew each other." One month later, La Salle reached Niagara, becoming the first European to walk across the interior of Michigan.

In 1701 the last major French outpost in Michigan was founded when Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac established Fort Pontchartrain du De Troit. The settlement was soon known simply as Detroit.

Between 1689 and 1763 France and Great Britain fought four wars as they struggled for world supremacy. The last war, called the French and Indian War, started in 1754. The war ended in North America in 1760. The treaty, signed three years later, ended French control of the Great Lakes.

FATHER JACQUES MARQUETTE

Father Jacques Marquette spent only nine years in North America, yet his accomplishments and legends made him one of the most important French missionaries in New France. Born in France and trained as a Jesuit, the twenty-nine-year-old Marquette came to America to Christianize Native Americans in 1666. After mastering several dialects of the Algonquin language, Marquette helped found a Jesuit mission at Sault Ste. Marie in 1668. After a brief assignment at the Jesuits' Chequamegon Bay mission (present-day Ashland, Wisconsin), Marquette founded a mission at the Straits of Mackinac that he named after St. Ignatius Loyola. On May 17, 1673, Marquette along with six other men, including Louis Jolliet, a native Canadian trapper and map maker, left St. Ignace to explore a "Great River" that lay to the west. A month later, they became the first Frenchmen to see the Mississippi River. They canoed down the river until they realized that it flowed south into the Gulf of Mexico and not westward, as they had hoped. Jolliet returned to Canada, while Marquette remained among the Illinois Indians. In the spring of 1675, Marquette journeyed up the eastern shore of Lake Michigan on his return to St. Ignace. Weak with fever, the thirty-eight-year-old Jesuit missionary died near present-day Ludington.



Jesuit crucifix
at the Michigan
Historical Museum

THE FUR TRADE

As the seventeenth century dawned, the French became aware of the enormous untapped reservoir of furs in North America. At the time, France was becoming the fashion center of Europe and there simply weren't enough animals in Europe to satisfy the demand. The French and the British, working closely with Native Americans, sent all types of furs to Europe, many of which were used for broad-brimmed hats. The most important fur was from the beaver. According to one source, the fur trade might better be labeled the "beaver trade." Neither migratory nor prolific, the beaver was vulnerable. As the animals were exterminated from an area the traders and trappers moved farther west. The French government tried to control the fur trade by licensing trappers and establishing outposts along strategic trade routes in the western part of New France. France's most important center for the fur trade was the Straits of Mackinac. Some of the most colorful individuals of the fur trade were the *voyageurs*. Renown for their physical strength, *voyageurs* paddled their canoes up to eighteen hours a day. When they were forced to portage, they carried heavy packs of furs. According to one observer, *voyageurs* moved along the portages "at a pace which made unburdened travelers pant for breath in their endeavor not to be left behind." The fur trade was one of the great prizes that began a century-long struggle between France and England for control of the interior of the continent.

ANTOINE DE LA MOTHE CADILLAC

Born in 1658 to a middle-class French family, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac arrived in Canada in 1683. After marrying Marie Therese Guyon, Cadillac settled in Quebec where he formed a long-term relationship with Count Frontenac, governor-general of New France. Frontenac made Cadillac a lieutenant in the army and gave him command of the post at the Straits of Mackinac. As the seventeenth century ended, Cadillac envisioned a settlement that would keep the British and their Indian allies out of the Great Lakes area, while controlling the fur trade. On July 24, 1701, Cadillac and his command of about one hundred men, which included his nine-year-old son Antoine, landed on a sandy beach at the foot of a thirty-foot cliff along the Detroit River. Here, Cadillac built a log palisade that he called Fort Pontchartrain du De Troit (*the straits*), after the French minister of Marine. The future city of Detroit was founded. Several months later, Madame Cadillac traveled one thousand miles by canoe to join her husband, becoming the first European woman to arrive in Michigan. When Cadillac left Detroit in 1710, his settlement had become home to several thousand Native Americans, but only a handful of French Canadians. Nevertheless, he accurately predicted, "the ground here is very good for building eventually a large town."

3 The British in Michigan

1760-1796

ON NOVEMBER 29, 1760, British Major Robert Rogers and his command arrived at Detroit. At noon, the French Fleur-de-lis was lowered and the British Union Jack was raised. The peaceful transfer of power on the parade ground at Fort Detroit that day was shattered less than three years later by one of the most formidable Native American uprisings in American history.

During the recently ended war with France, British agents had obtained the sympathy of many Great Lakes Indians by promising an expansion of trade and a continuation of the French policy of distributing food, guns, ammunition and liquor to the natives. When the British came to power their policy changed. Lord Jeffrey Amherst, governor general of British North America, decided to stop coddling the Indians, whom he considered crude and uncivilized. A good general, but a lousy diplomat, Amherst stopped giving the natives free ammunition and liquor. He also threw the fur trade into chaos by making changes to the existing procedures that victimized the Native Americans.

By 1763 Native Americans—angry with Amherst’s actions and equally concerned with the advance of American colonists into the Ohio River Valley—attacked British outposts all along the frontier. The year-long Indian uprising, known as Pontiac’s Rebellion, left all but a handful of British forts in Indian hands.

In Michigan, Ottawa chief Pontiac and his followers lay siege to Detroit in May 1763. Elsewhere, British garrisons at Forts St. Joseph and Michilimackinac easily fell to the Native Americans. By fall, Pontiac had failed to capture Detroit and, with his followers returning to their families to prepare for the winter, he agreed to a peace, ending one of the longest sieges in Native American history.

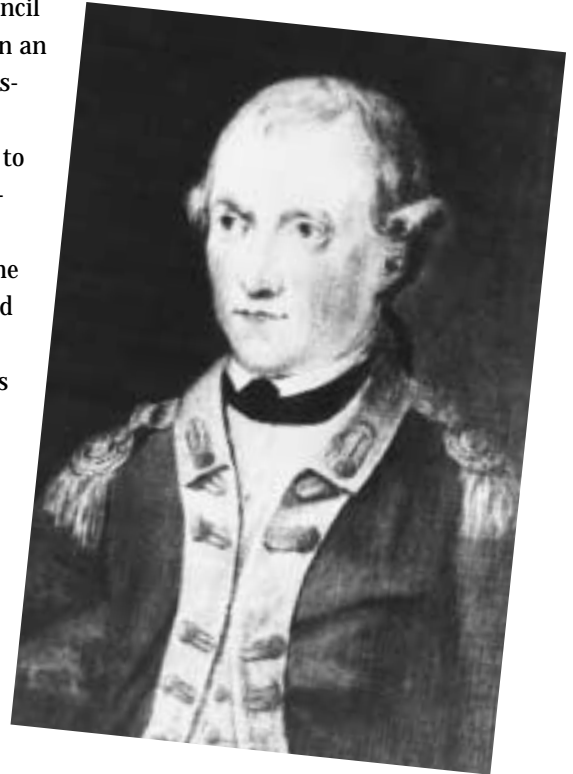
Pontiac’s Rebellion temporarily halted the westward movement of American colonists. More important, it led the British Crown to issue the Proclamation of 1763, which greatly limited white settlement west of the Appalachians, angering American colonists and leading to the American Revolution. There was no fighting in Michigan during the American Revolution. However, Detroit was the center of British power in the west and raids on American settlements in Kentucky were organized from there.

The Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolution in 1783, obligated the British to evacuate their western posts “with all convenient speed.” It took them thirteen years. During those years, the British kept troops at Detroit and Mackinac and encouraged the Native Americans to resist the westward advance of white Americans. The United States tried to force the British to leave, but with no success. Finally, on August 20, 1794, an American force under the command of General “Mad” Anthony Wayne defeated the Native Americans in a pitched battle about twelve miles south of present-day Toledo, Ohio. The American victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, along with the presence of Wayne’s army, forced the British to leave Michigan. On July 11, 1796, the American flag was finally raised over Detroit. Two months later, the Americans took possession of Fort Mackinac.

Pontiac’s
tomahawk
at the Detroit
Historical
Museum

PONTIAC'S REBELLION

In late April 1763 Ottawa war chief Pontiac called a grand council of the tribes in the vicinity of Detroit and urged them to join him in an attack upon the nearby British fort. Intelligent, shrewd and possessing oratorical prowess, Pontiac proposed a plan to capture Fort Detroit. On the morning of May 7, fifty warriors accompanied him to the fort, each carrying a concealed tomahawk or knife. Pontiac carried a green-and-white wampum belt (shells embroidered into a belt). Once inside the fort, he would signal the attack by turning the belt over. The fort's commander, Major Henry Gladwin, had learned of the plan and Pontiac's followers found themselves outnumbered by the British redcoats, who were armed and ready. Pontiac and his men left the fort. The next day the Indians returned and asked to be allowed into the fort. Gladwin refused. Pontiac and his followers then placed Detroit under siege. Detroit's defenders worried about flaming arrows and suffered a constant shortage of supplies, yet, the Indians failed to close Gladwin's water link to the east and force the fort's surrender. The siege ended on October 31, 1763, when Gladwin received a message from Pontiac that read, "All my young men have buried their hatchets. I think you will forget the bad things which have taken place for some time past. Likewise, I shall forget what you have done to me, in order to think of nothing but good. . . . I wish you a good day."



Major Henry Gladwin

PROCLAMATION OF 1763

After acquiring a vast new territory with their victory over the French in the French and Indian War, the British issued the Proclamation of 1763 that set the boundary beyond which American colonists could not settle. Trying to maintain peace with the Native Americans and reduce their military costs, the British closed the Ohio River Valley to settlement. The Proclamation—which was intended to be temporary—proved impossible to enforce and the colonists ignored the decree, often suffering depredations by Native Americans who resented their westward advance. The Proclamation also taught the colonists that they could flout royal authority with little fear of punishment—at least at the hands of the British. Finally, the Proclamation nullified colonial land claims. The friction created by the Proclamation worsened relations between the colonies and the Crown that led to full-scale rebellion a decade later.

FORT MACKINAC

In the fall of 1779, Major Patrick Sinclair took command of the British garrison at Fort Michilimackinac, the mainland fort at present-day Mackinaw City. Sinclair immediately decided to relocate the fort on Mackinac Island, which he believed was a more defensible position. Between 1779 and 1781 a new fort was built on the island's south side overlooking the harbor. Materials from the old fort were transported to the island. Some buildings, including the fort's church, were hauled in sections or in their entirety over the frozen straits that winter. What was left of the old fort was burned when the island fort was completed in 1781. The fort was never attacked during the American Revolution. In September 1796—thirteen years after the British were supposed to leave Mackinac Island—American forces took possession of Fort Mackinac.

4 Americans Come to Michigan

1796-1815

ABOUT MID-MORNING on July 11, 1796, two schooners flying the American flag tied up at the King's Wharf (present-day Shelby Street) in Detroit. How the American detachment was received by Detroit's British garrison is lost to history. About noon, the British Union Jack was lowered and the Stars and Stripes was raised. Thirteen years after the Treaty of Paris had granted the Americans their independence, the British were moving across the Detroit River to present-day Canada, ending their thirty-six-year rule of Michigan.



Lewis Cass

In Detroit, the American force, soon commanded by Lt. Colonel John Francis Hamtramck, found a settlement of one hundred houses and about five hundred people. Mackinac Island, the other British-occupied settlement in Michigan, was taken over by the Americans on September 1, 1796. It consisted of sixty-four log cabins and a fort that was in terrible condition. Only about twenty people lived on the island during the winter. The island's summer population, however, soared to over two thousand, many of them Native Americans actively involved in the fur trade.

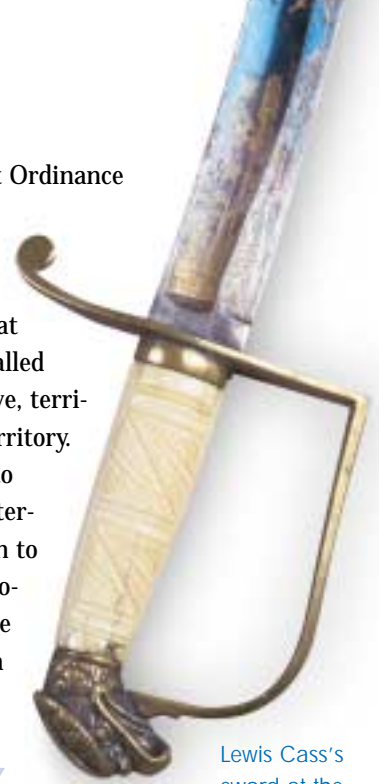
Although the American government was unable to occupy Michigan until 1796, it had made provision for governing the territory. Michigan was part of the Northwest Territory, as designated by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. The first American election in Michigan was held in December 1798 to choose representatives to the Northwest Territory's legislative council. (Michigan's first election was administered by the British in 1792 when three Detroiters were selected to serve in the Ontario Provincial Assembly.) Solomon Sibley won the American election, possibly because his opponent was pro-British or because he gave voters free liquor on election day.

In 1805, two years after Ohio became the first state carved out of the Northwest Territory, Detroiters campaigned successfully to have the Michigan Territory created. Detroit became the territorial capital. The first territorial governor, William Hull, was joined by secretary Stanley Griswold and Justices Augustus Elias Brevoort Woodward, John Griffin and Frederick Bates. Bates was the only official who lived in Michigan, having settled in Detroit in 1797 where he soon operated a prosperous business. The Michigan Territory, which was formally created on June 30, 1805, began under a dark cloud. Two weeks earlier, sparks from the pipe of the town's baker fell into a pile of hay. The resulting fire spread quickly, and within a few hours only the fort, which was separated from the town by the parade ground, and a few large buildings along the Detroit River were left standing.

The Michigan Territory experienced little growth in the years prior to the War of 1812. Traveling to Michigan was arduous and there remained a concern over Native Americans who were encouraged by the British to resist American settlement. The war proved a further setback, leaving settlements along the Detroit River devastated. One newly arrived settler found only "misery & ruin & famine & desolation." There was, however, one bright spot—the appointment of Lewis Cass as territorial governor. In thirteen years as governor, the former Ohio militia colonel did more than any one person to promote settlement and place Michigan on the road to statehood.

NORTHWEST ORDINANCE

One of the most important pieces of legislation adopted by Congress, the Northwest Ordinance indicated how territories and states were to be formed, guaranteeing in the process that residents living outside the original colonies would have equal rights. Following on the heels of the Land Ordinance of 1785 (which established a system to survey all lands in advance of their sale), the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 focused on the land that was bounded by the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and the Great Lakes. The Ordinance called for the Northwest Territory to be divided into no fewer than three, but no more than five, territories. Congress appointed a governor, a secretary and three judges to administer the territory. When more than five thousand adult males lived in a territory, elections would be held to form a legislative council and to select a nonvoting representative to Congress. When a territory's population reached sixty thousand people, it could seek congressional permission to write a state constitution and apply for statehood. Declaring that human slavery was prohibited from the Northwest Territory, the Ordinance became the first national legislative measure restricting slavery. The Ordinance also served as a model for the transition of a territory to a state elsewhere in the country.



Lewis Cass's sword at the Michigan Historical Museum

MICHIGAN BECOMES A TERRITORY

When Ohio entered the Union as a state in 1803, the remainder of the Northwest Territory became known as the Indiana Territory. The change was particularly annoying to Detroiters, especially since the new territorial capital was at Vincennes, Indiana—a considerable distance in a time of few roads. The dissatisfaction led three hundred Detroiters to sign a petition asking Congress to create a separate territory. Congress responded favorably to the request and on January 11, 1805, President Thomas Jefferson signed the act establishing the Michigan Territory. The first territorial governor was William Hull. A Massachusetts native, Hull was a graduate of Yale, a lawyer and a veteran of the American Revolution. A man of considerable ability, Hull was handicapped by a total lack of acquaintance with frontier life and its problems. Those problems began immediately. On June 11, 1805, a fire destroyed Detroit. According to one observer, “in less than two hours the whole town was in flames.” Amazingly, none of the nine hundred people living in Detroit were killed. Two weeks later, the Michigan Territory formally came into being.

WAR OF 1812

During the early morning darkness of July 12, 1812, an American army under the command of Michigan territorial governor William Hull crossed the Detroit River and invaded Canada. Hull's invasion was part of a grand American strategy to capture British Canada at the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Great Britain. Hull was optimistic, but one month later the politician-turned-general had retreated back to Detroit, where he surrendered the city to the British with embarrassing suddenness.

In Michigan, the War of 1812 went from bad to worse. The surrender of Detroit was preceded by the fall of Fort Mackinac, which surrendered without firing a shot. In January 1813 an American force was routed near present-day Monroe in a fiasco known as the Battle of the River Raisin. In September 1813 the U.S. naval victory on Lake Erie forced the British to abandon Detroit, but efforts to recapture Fort Mackinac during the summer of 1814 failed miserably.

The war, which ended in late 1814, had a devastating effect upon Michigianians. Claiming that more than half the territory's population was “destitute,” Territorial Justice Augustus Woodward noted in March 1815, “the desolation of the territory is beyond all perception.”

5 Settlement & Statehood

1800-1850

LITTLE CHANGED IN MICHIGAN during the years immediately following the War of 1812. Fur trading still dominated the economy and most of the territory was unsurveyed and unavailable for settlement. Advance reports were negative. General Duncan McArthur, who was stationed in Detroit in 1814, concluded that since “nine-tenths of the land in the territory is unfit for cultivation, [it] would be to the advantage of the government to remove every inhabitant of the territory, pay for the improvements, and reduce them to ashes, leaving nothing but the garrison posts.” A few years later, the U.S. surveyor general agreed, declaring that not one acre in one hundred in Michigan could be cultivated.

Territorial governor Lewis Cass responded to the criticism with an all-out campaign to boost Michigan’s image. He convinced the federal government to survey the land. Cass also lobbied the government to build roads and lighthouses to facilitate travel within the territory. He negotiated land treaties with Native Americans, organized counties and pushed for public schools. As settlers began arriving, the territory made great strides in democratic government under his tutelage. In 1831 Cass left Michigan when he accepted an appointment to serve as U.S. secretary of war. Yet under his leadership, Michigan became, in the words of Cass’s biographer, “a truly American commonwealth.”

The 1830s was Michigan’s decade. The territory’s population increased from 27,278 people to over 212,000 people as thousands of settlers moved west after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. Pioneers came to Michigan because land cost only \$1.25 an acre. In 1836, 4.1 million acres were purchased in Michigan, which represented 20 percent of all the monies the federal government derived from land sales across the country in that year.

The huge land rush, called “Michigan Fever,” aided acting governor Stevens T. Mason as he pushed the territory toward statehood. These efforts, however, were delayed because of a struggle over the Toledo Strip, a 500-square-mile piece of land dominated by the mouth of Maumee River. The politically powerful state of Ohio also claimed the land and—despite Michigan’s claim—Congress forced a settlement that gave Michigan the western Upper Peninsula and statehood for relinquishing claims to Toledo. On January 26, 1837, President Andrew Jackson signed the bill that made Michigan the twenty-sixth state in the Union. Mason, who had been elected the state’s first governor fifteen months before the official granting of statehood, continued to serve Michigan.



This box was carried by the Michigan militia during the Toledo War. Today it is at the Michigan Historical Museum. Note the words: Toledo MI.

ERIE CANAL

Begun in 1817 and completed in 1825, the Erie Canal had a major impact on Michigan's settlement. The canal, only four feet deep and forty-two feet wide, crossed upstate New York, linking the Hudson River with Lake Erie—a distance of 363 miles. For the first time, New England families, anxious to settle the fertile lands of the Midwest, had an easy way to move west. As important, the canal brought huge savings in shipping costs to manufacturers who previously had transported goods overland to the Mississippi Valley. Passengers traveled on flatboats pulled by horses that walked along the edge of the canal. Barges traveled around two miles an hour and cost the passengers about a penny every two miles. When the barges reached Buffalo, New York—the western end of the canal—passengers boarded steamboats for the three-day journey to Detroit. From there, they headed inland to settle the Michigan wilderness.

PIONEER LIFE

Surviving the Michigan wilderness, according to one pioneer, “required real grit and the stiffest backbone.” A pioneer family heading into Michigan's interior faced numerous problems. Roads were often mere trails that could easily turn into quagmires, bogging down both wagons and oxen. There were no bridges, so even the smallest creek posed a hurdle. Fallen trees, getting lost and wild animals challenged even the hardest pioneer. Once the pioneer family reached the plot of land they had purchased, a shanty was constructed until a log cabin could be built. Building the average cabin required cutting and dragging to the site fifty to sixty logs. The logs were woven into a one-room cabin. A door and a window were cut. (Since glass was unavailable, greased paper was used for the window.) A roof was crafted using shingles cut from logs. Nails were hard to find, so the shingles were held in place by a log. When the cabin was finished, the pioneer family cleared some land and planted a crop. The pioneer relied upon himself to feed his family, and grain had to be carried to the nearest gristmill to be ground into flour. Livestock were an important part of the pioneer experience, and many a pioneer awoke to hear his hog yelping as it was being carried off by a bear. Yet, the worst pest was the mosquito. With water everywhere, most pioneers suffered a bout with malarial fever (better known as the “ague”). One slogan warned: “Don't go to Michigan, that land of ills. The word means AGUE, fever and chills.” But the Michigan wilderness disappeared quickly, replaced by farms and small towns.

TOLEDO WAR

On January 12, 1835, Michigan territorial governor Stevens T. Mason announced to the legislative council that Michigan faced a crisis. The territory's most recent request to call a constitutional convention had been rejected by the Congress. The twenty-three-year-old governor declared that Michigan had a right to be admitted to the Union. The council concurred, calling a constitutional convention and beginning a two-year struggle that resulted—only after much trial and tribulation—in Michigan becoming the nation's twenty-sixth state.

The struggle was caused by a disagreement between Michigan and Ohio over who owned Toledo, especially the mouth of the Maumee River. Connecting Toledo by rivers and canals to the Ohio River would allow boats to travel unimpeded from Lake Erie to the Gulf of Mexico. Ohio claimed the area known as the Toledo Strip and Michigan responded by sending armed men to Toledo to defend its interests. This was the Toledo War. There was some fighting, but only one man was injured. The war ended in September 1835 when President Andrew Jackson fired Mason. Two months later the voters of Michigan elected Mason governor of a state that officially did not exist. In the meantime, Congress debated the issue, proposing that Michigan give up the Toledo Strip in exchange for the western Upper Peninsula and statehood. Michiganians thought they had been robbed, but—having no other choice—they accepted the compromise.



Stevens T. Mason

6 The Civil War

1830-1865

ON THE EVENING of April 12, 1861, the manager of the Detroit Theatre rushed on stage and announced that Fort Sumter, in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, had been bombarded by Southern forces. A momentary silence hung over the theatre, then the orchestra struck up “Yankee Doodle” and the audience rose as one and gave cheers for the Union.

Michiganians were not surprised that civil war had come to the nation. As early as January 1, 1861, newly elected governor Austin Blair had declared that South Carolina’s secession a few weeks earlier was “revolution, and revolution . . . is treason, and must be treated as such.” But Michigan’s response to the coming war was best summarized by U.S. senator Zachariah Chandler, who declared a month later that “without a little bloodletting, this Union will not, in my estimation, be worth a rush.” In the years before the war, Michigan witnessed a growing opposition to southern slavery—the primary cause for the coming of hostilities. During the summer of 1854, the Republican party, founded in Jackson, Michigan, was firmly opposed to the extension of slavery. Being at the end of the Underground Railroad, Michigan had a well-organized and vocal antislavery movement.

Michigan responded quickly when President Abraham Lincoln called for troops to deal with “combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings.” The initial call for only 1,000 troops (one regiment)—from a state with over 750,000 people—left some men fearful that the war might end before they got into service. Less than ten days after Fort Sumter fell, George Woodruff of Marshall observed, “Our people are prepared for the most prompt and energetic action of the government, and are already becoming impatient of delay in forwarding volunteers.” The first troops to leave the state were the First Michigan Infantry, which arrived in Washington, DC, on May 16, 1861. According to tradition, President Lincoln greeted the regiment, the first to arrive from a western state, with “Thank God for Michigan.” Eventually, ninety thousand Michigan men—and a few women—saw service in the Union army during the war. Michigan’s total included about 1,500 African Americans who served with the First Michigan Colored Infantry, later the 102nd U.S. Colored Infantry.

From the war’s first big battle, where Michiganians covered the retreat of a defeated Union army, to the capture of Confederate president Jefferson Davis four years later, Michigan’s boys in blue saw action in all the war’s major battles. Seventy Michiganians were awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation’s highest honor for meritorious service.

The state’s best-known generals included Orlando B. Willcox, who led the First Michigan to war and earned a Medal of Honor at First Bull Run; Israel B. Richardson, who commanded a division at Antietam where he was mortally wounded; Alpheus S. Williams, who commanded a corps at several major battles, including Gettysburg; and, George A. Custer, who commanded the Michigan Cavalry Brigade, one of the fightingest units in the war.

A year after the war, in a ceremony where the colors of the Michigan regiments were formally presented to the governor, General Willcox concluded, “We have tried to do our duty, and we have done no more than that duty which every citizen owes to a free and fraternal government.” Willcox symbolically surrendered the flags and added, “We shall ever retain our pride in their glorious associations, as well as our love for the old peninsula state.” Today these flags are housed in the Michigan Historical Museum.

Burnside
cavalry carbine
used during
the Civil War

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

An informal network of individuals committed to helping escaped slaves find their way north, the Underground Railroad meant freedom for thousands of slaves. Neither underground nor a railroad, the Underground Railroad derived its name from a slave master who claimed his escaped slave eluded him along an “underground road.” Because of the popularity of railroads in the days before the Civil War, “railroad” soon replaced road. Railroad jargon was used along the route. Safe houses were called “stations” or “depots,” and “conductors” or “stationmasters” were those white and free black citizens who assisted the fleeing slaves. Houses, businesses and churches were potential depots for escaped slaves, who hid during the day and traveled at night. Their ultimate destination was the slave-free northern states or Canada. Residents living in many southern Michigan towns, including former slave Sojourner Truth, “worked on” the Underground Railroad. Although there is no way of knowing how many slaves escaped to Michigan, the network’s existence irritated Southerners and fueled the debate that led to civil war.



Sojourner Truth

BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

For the men of the Twenty-fourth Michigan Infantry July 1, 1863, began with a forced march as the Union army raced North to contend with General Robert E. Lee’s rebel army that had invaded Pennsylvania. The Twenty-fourth Michigan arrived at the small town of Gettysburg in mid-morning and quickly went into battle. By late afternoon, the overwhelmed and outnumbered Northerners withdrew to positions east of town. The Twenty-fourth had gone into battle with 496 men. At day’s end fewer than one hundred remained, giving it the dubious honor of having the greatest losses of any Northern regiment at the Battle of Gettysburg.

The men of the Twenty-fourth were only some of the Michiganians who fought at the war’s biggest battle. Among those who fought nobly on the second day of the three-day battle was the Fourth Michigan Infantry. In heavy fighting in the Wheatfield, twenty-six-year-old Colonel Harrison H. Jeffords of Ann Arbor was mortally wounded trying to save his unit’s flag from rebel hands.

On the battle’s third day, the men of the Seventh Michigan Infantry helped repulse the massive rebel attack known as Pickett’s Charge. A sergeant in the Seventh wrote, “We stuck to our barricade and fought till they—what were left of them—were glad to come into our lines or skeddadle double quick.” On the same day, the Michigan Cavalry Brigade, led by newly appointed Brigadier General George Armstrong Custer of Monroe, Michigan, attacked a large force of rebel cavalry and forced it to withdraw at a crucial point in the battle. According to one historian, the charges that Custer’s men made were “the most dramatic saber charges of this or any other war.” Michigan’s role at Gettysburg came at a price. Of the nearly four thousand Michiganians at this battle, at least 30 percent were left killed, wounded or missing.

WOMEN’S ROLE

During the Civil War, Michigan women served the Union cause in a variety of—and often under appreciated—ways. As men went off to war, women remained at home where they were thrust into leadership roles. They managed the farm or business, ran the household and organized “relief societies” that provided soldiers with everything from foodstuffs to stationery. These societies also operated hospitals near the war front where many women volunteered as nurses. Some women even joined the army. Annie Etheridge of Detroit served as a modern-day combat medic. According to one soldier, she “always displayed the most intrepid coolness and indifference to danger.” Sarah E. Edmonds of Flint assumed the appearance of a man and spent two years in the army before deserting when an injury would have led to hospital confinement and the inevitable disclosure of her sex.

Natural Resources

1855-PRESENT

ON JUNE 22, 1855, the steamer *Illinois* became the first boat to pass through the Soo Locks. A few years earlier, Michigan's congressional delegation had negotiated a grant of 750,000 acres of public land to finance the building of a canal that bypassed the rapids of the St. Mary's River at Sault Ste. Marie. The debate in Congress had been controversial, prompting one Kentucky senator to equate building a lock at Sault Ste. Marie with constructing a canal on the Moon. He could not have been more wrong. The Soo Locks released a flood of copper and iron ore from the western Upper Peninsula that fueled the American Industrial Revolution in the days after the Civil War. Today, the Soo Locks, expanded over the years to accommodate the increasingly larger boats traveling the Great Lakes, remain the busiest locks in the world.

As early as 5,000 B.C. Native Americans were using Michigan copper to make tools and ornaments. Several centuries later, French missionaries noted the presence of copper in the western Upper Peninsula, and in the early 1770s the British made an attempt to mine copper in the Ontonagon area. In 1841 Douglass Houghton, Michigan's first state geologist, predicted, "There can scarcely be a shadow of a doubt [that the Keweenaw Peninsula] will eventually prove of great value to our citizens and to the nation."

A few years later, the copper boom was on. Thousands of eager and naive miners and entrepreneurs headed to the wilderness of the western U.P. to "strike it rich" in the nation's first mineral rush. Most of these early mining efforts failed. After the Civil War Michigan's copper mining was dominated by the Calumet & Hecla Company. From 1847 until 1887 Michigan's mines produced more copper than

any other state. Copper continued to be mined in record amounts well into the twentieth century all along the Keweenaw Peninsula. Today, no copper is mined in Michigan, the last mine having closed in 1995.

Iron Ore had been discovered near Teal Lake in September 1844 when William Austin Burt was surveying the area around Marquette.

A year later, several businessmen from Jackson, Michigan, opened the Jackson Mining Company.

Eventually, miners worked three Upper Peninsula iron ore ranges—the Marquette, the Menominee and the Gogebic. The latter two ranges were discovered after the Civil War.

The mines on the Menominee closed in the 1890s; the last mine on the Gogebic closed in 1966.

Today, mining continues on the Marquette Range, where about 25 percent of the nation's iron ore is produced.

Beginning in the 1840s, Michigan's forests provided a boost to the state's economy. For the second half of the nineteenth century Michigan's logging industry led the nation in lumber production. During the 1880s Michigan sawmills produced 25 percent of the nation's lumber. The lumber industry brought people and millions of dollars to northern Michigan. Its legacy also included cutover areas that fueled some of the worst forest fires in American history. Today, following extensive reforestation efforts, particularly during the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, logging remains a viable industry.

The double-bitted ax, also called the Michigan ax, was an important tool of the lumbering trade.



MINING

Besides copper and iron ore, Michiganders have mined a variety of minerals. Some of the first mineral activity in the state occurred near Jackson where coal was mined. Much of the coal taken from near Jackson was used to fuel that city's railroad industry. During the 1890s coal was mined near Saginaw, Bay City and St. Charles. Although there is an estimated 300 million tons of coal under the southern Lower Peninsula, it is low-grade and not profitable to mine.

Salt mining began in the 1850s. By the 1880s Michigan was producing 2.5 barrels of salt a year—40 percent of the nation's production. In 1910 a salt mine was opened beneath the city of Detroit. Today, there is an estimated 70 trillion tons of unmined salt beneath Detroit alone. In a related matter, in the 1890s Henry Herbert Dow developed a process for extracting bromine chemicals from brine he mined from wells in the Midland area. His efforts led him to organize the Dow Chemical Company.

Gypsum, sand, gravel, sandstone and limestone are among the many minerals mined in Michigan. Even gold and silver have been taken from beneath Michigan. In 1881 entrepreneur Julius Ropes struck gold near Ispeming in Marquette County. Ropes closed his operation in the late 1890s, taking an estimated \$580,000 in gold bullion and \$60,000 in silver out of his mine. During the 1970s gold and silver were mined at the White Pine Mine near Ontonagon.



Iron Miners

LOGGING

When the pioneers settled the interior of the Michigan during the 1830s most of the land was covered with trees. It was said that a squirrel could travel on tree branches across the state without ever touching the ground. Commercial logging began in the 1840s, and from the Civil War until the early twentieth century Michigan led the nation in lumber production. The favorite logs came from white pine, especially the cork pine. These 300-year-old trees grew up to 200 feet tall with five-foot diameters and were generally located in a belt across the northern part of the Lower Peninsula. Commercial logging started when a "timber cruiser" identified the best trees. After that land was purchased, "shanty boys" moved in to cut the trees into logs. The work was done in the winter so the logs could be hauled by horse-drawn sleighs across the ice and snow to the banks of frozen creeks and rivers. During the spring thaw the logs were dumped into the rivers and "river hogs" rode them to sawmills located in cities at the mouths of most Michigan rivers. There, the logs, which had been marked by "brands," were cut into lumber.

One of the greatest changes in logging occurred in the late 1870s when Winfield Scott Gerrish introduced narrow-gauge railroads to logging. Using railroads allowed loggers to move logs to sawmills year-round. They also took hardwoods, which had been left behind because the logs did not float. Since loggers did not replant trees, cutting entire forests created problems. Forest fires were fueled by the stumps and branches left behind. The cutover land was sold to settlers, but the sandy soil that was good for pine was not good for farming. Much of this land reverted back to the state and today is part of Michigan's extensive state and national forest systems.

AGRICULTURE

Throughout the twentieth century, as Michigan became an urban state the percentage of farmers declined significantly. Yet, today the agriculture and food industry is the state's second largest industry. During the mid-1990s approximately ten million acres were used by over fifty thousand farmers. Michigan farmers produce over one hundred commercial crops, and rank in the top three in at least two dozen different crops. These include navy beans and tart cherries (first); dry beans and celery (second); and apples and asparagus (third).

8 Manufacturing

1890-PRESENT

IN 1870 THE MICHIGAN STATE GAZETTEER noted there were “many substantial evidences of commercial prosperity” in Michigan, especially in Detroit. Thirty years later, 25 percent of the state’s working population held factory jobs. The state’s manufacturing center was Detroit, which boasted a large pool of workers and investment capital.

During the 1880s tobacco products were the single most valuable group of products of Detroit’s factories. Although tobacco was not grown in Michigan, more chewing tobacco was processed in Detroit than anywhere else in the nation. Detroit’s climate and methods of production explain the industry’s success. However, the city’s reputation as an “open shop” (where employers paid their workers a lower wage) may also explain the industry’s success. The city’s tobacco manufacturers also produced forty million cigars annually. It is no surprise that Detroit was dubbed the “Tampa of the North.”

Detroit was the center of shipbuilding in Michigan. In 1822 Eber Brock Ward started working for his uncle, who built sailing boats in nearby Marine City. Ward later expanded his investments and, at the time of his death in 1875, was the state’s richest person and the premier industrialist in the Midwest.

One of Detroit’s most spectacular manufacturing concerns was stoves. The industry’s “big three” companies—Detroit, Michigan and Peninsular—along with several smaller firms, made the city the world’s leading producer of iron stoves. By the 1890s, the Michigan Stove Company, which claimed to be the world’s largest, employed 1,200 workers who made over 76,000 Garland-brand stoves annually.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century Detroit was the national leader in manufacturing railroad cars. Detroit companies had been making railroad cars since before the Civil War, and following a series of mergers, the Michigan-Peninsula Car Company stood alone at the top. With over nine thousand employees, the company had the capacity of producing one hundred freight cars a day.

Manufacturing was not only located in the state’s largest city. In 1876 Grand Rapids manufacturers exhibited their furniture at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.

The resulting enthusiasm led buyers from across the country to visit Grand Rapids. Many years later, the popularity of Grand Rapids-made furniture prompted a federal court to rule that the words “Grand

Rapids furniture,” had acquired such a reputation

that the American public understood that Grand Rapids furni-

ture was “superior in design, workmanship and value to furniture usually pur-

chased elsewhere.” Other notable late-nineteenth century Michigan manufacturers include:

Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company (Kalamazoo), Dow Chemical Company (Midland), Kalamazoo Stove Company (Kalamazoo), Round Oak Stove Company (Dowagiac), Durant-Dort Carriage Company (Flint), Gale Manufacturing Company (Albion) and the Advance Thresher Company (Battle Creek).



Michigan Gentleman cigar box in the Michigan Historical Museum's collection

IMMIGRATION

During the early years of the twentieth century many European immigrants arrived in Michigan. The most numerous were Poles, who replaced the Irish and Germans as the most prominent foreign-born group in Detroit. Other ethnic groups—Italians, Scandinavians, Hungarians, Russians, Greeks—also settled in the state’s industrial centers. In 1930 some parts of Detroit had a foreign-born population that reached as high as 60 percent. As the century continued, peoples from the Middle East migrated to Michigan. In 1919 the first Muslim mosque in the country was built in Highland Park. By the early 1970s Detroit had the largest Arabic-speaking community in North America.

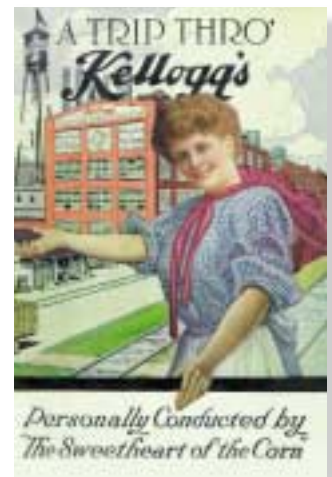
AUTOMOBILES

The invention of the automobile affected the daily life of twentieth-century Americans more than any other technological development. At the center of this change was Michigan, which became the nation’s automobile capital less than twenty years after the “horseless carriage” made its first appearance.

On March 6, 1896, Charles King became the first Michigianian to operate a gasoline-powered “horseless carriage” when he drove his four-cylinder vehicle several blocks down Woodward Avenue in Detroit. Later that year, Detroit’s Henry Ford and Lansing’s Ransom E. Olds drove their horseless carriages. Within a few years, the lightweight, inexpensive Curved Dash Olds became the first automobile to be manufactured in any significant numbers. Olds also stimulated other Michigan manufacturers. Among those was Ford, who in 1908 introduced the Model T. The car, which only came in black, boasted a fifteen-horsepower engine that reached speeds of up to 45 miles per hour. Over fifteen million Model Ts were sold, making it one of the most important cars in automobile history. In 1908 Flint’s William Durant founded the General Motors Company. Offering Americans a range of vehicles, General Motors became the world’s largest producer of automobiles by the 1920s.

BREAKFAST CEREAL

It happened in 1894 during an experiment to make healthier food for patients at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. A batch of cooked wheat accidentally was left out and dried. Rather than throw it away, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, director of the Sanitarium, and his brother, William Keith (better known as W. K.), passed the wheat through rollers, creating thin flakes. These early wheat flakes, called Granose, were tough and rather tasteless, but they were a hit. On May 31, 1894, Dr. Kellogg applied for a patent on “flaked cereals” made from wheat, barley, oats, corn and other grains. The Kelloggs discovered the wheat flake, but it took Charles W. Post to make Battle Creek the cereal city. This Illinois businessman opened his own spa in Battle Creek where he experimented with health foods. In 1895 Post introduced Postum Cereal Food Coffee, a noncaffeine coffee substitute created from wheat, bran and molasses. One of the first entrepreneurs to use extensive retail promotion to sell a food product, Post placed advertisements in magazines and newspapers. The results were startling. Formed in 1896, the Postum Cereal Company was a multimillion-dollar operation by the turn of the century. Others followed Post. In June 1902 a reporter visiting Battle Creek noted, “everyone has gone daft over [the] food cereal business.” At that time there were more than thirty cereal firms offering a variety of foods whose claims greatly exceeded their product. One exception was W. K. Kellogg’s Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company, which was formed in 1906. Although a cautious man, W. K. was fearless when it came to advertising. Kellogg’s advertising campaigns proved legendary, most notably the Sweetheart of the Corn. The healthy, pretty, country girl (modernized over the years), along with Kellogg’s signature (“none genuine without this signature”) quickly moved Kellogg to top of the cereal industry.



1912 Kellogg's Cereal ad

9 Depression & Labor Movement

1929-1940

IN 1928 SENATOR JAMES COUZENS of Michigan proposed that in times of economic depression the federal government should create public works programs to provide jobs for the unemployed. Couzens's suggestions were ignored. A year later the stock market crash ushered in the Great Depression, which had a devastating effect upon heavily industrialized states like Michigan. The crash was followed by a cycle of economic collapse. Workers lost their jobs because of industrial cutbacks; industries could not hire workers because there was no market for their goods; there was no market because the workers had no money; the workers had no money because industries could not hire them.

No one escaped the effects of the Depression, but among the hardest hit were autoworkers. Throughout the 1920s auto production grew, peaking at over 5 million units in 1929. In 1930 it had fallen to 3 million; by 1932 it stood at 1.3 million. Poor sales were reflected in unemployment figures that grew until early 1933 when one of every two nonagricultural workers in Michigan was without a job. The unemployed stood in bread lines for what little relief was available. But the needs were too great. Many looked to the federal government but the response was not encouraging. Claiming "prosperity was just around the corner," President Herbert Hoover designed programs that relied upon state and local governments to deal with the problems. Nothing the president proposed halted the economic downslide.

As the Depression entered its third year with no sign of relief, an increasingly vocal minority advocated revolution. On the morning of March 7, 1932, three thousand unemployed men and women set out on a peaceful march to the Ford Motor Company's Rouge plant in Dearborn. At the Rouge plant the police and Ford security personnel used

tear gas and water hoses on the crowd. When the demonstrators started throwing things, the police opened fire. The Battle of the River Rouge (also called the Ford Hunger March) left five marchers dead and sixty wounded. Five days later, thousands of mourners solemnly paraded Woodward Avenue carrying red banners and marching to the *Internationale*, the Communist party anthem. Social unrest was further enflamed by demagogues like Father Charles Coughlin, the "radio priest" from Royal Oak, who blamed capitalism for the Depression.

In November 1932 Michigan supported Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt—the first time the state had given its electoral votes to a Democrat since 1852.

One of the most notable Michigan politicians of the 1930s was Frank Murphy. Elected mayor of Detroit in 1930, Murphy received national attention for his determined and imaginative efforts to alleviate the plight of the city's unemployed. Declaring that "no one in Detroit . . . must be allowed to go hungry, or cold or unhoused, or unclothed," Murphy strained the city's resources to aid the unfortunate. In 1936 Murphy was elected governor of Michigan. Having offended many conservatives by his handling of the Flint Sit-down Strike, he was defeated for reelection. After a short stint as U.S. attorney general, Murphy was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court where he served until his death in 1949.



CCC patch

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

Five days after his inauguration on March 4, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt outlined his conservation relief measure. The proposed Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) would recruit 250,000 unemployed young men to work on federal- and state-owned lands for “the prevention of forest fires, floods and soil erosion.” According to Roosevelt, the CCC would “conserve our precious natural resources” while placing “a vast army of the unemployed” into “healthful surroundings.” The CCC arrived in Michigan in May 1933 when a camp opened in the Hiawatha National Forest west of Sault Ste. Marie. During the next nine years, over 100,000 Michigan males joined the CCC. Operating out of camps located all over the state, Michigan enrollees planted 484 million trees (more than twice as many as in any other state), spent 140,000 days fighting forest fires, planted 156 million fish and constructed 7,000 miles of truck trails, 504 bridges and 222 buildings. Required to send home most of their monthly wage, Michigan enrollees provided their families with more than \$20 million. The CCC also taught thousands of American boys how to take orders, the rudiments of sanitation, first aid and personal cleanliness, and other skills that were directly transferable as they joined the armed forces to fight World War II.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

During the first one hundred days of his administration, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) introduced sweeping legislation in Congress to deal with the many emergencies confronting a nation facing its worst depression. To combat unemployment, FDR created the Civil Works Administration, which gave way to the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935. Nationally, the WPA spent \$11 billion and put 8.5 million people to work. Among its many components were public works programs, the Federal Theater Project, the Federal Writer’s Program, the Federal Arts Project and the National Youth Administration. In Michigan, about \$500 million was spent on WPA projects, with as many as 200,000 people on this agency’s payroll at any one time. One of the WPA’s most lasting programs was the painting of murals in U.S. post offices.

FLINT SIT-DOWN STRIKE

Described by one historian as “the most momentous confrontation between American labor and management” in the twentieth century, the Flint Sit-down Strike pitted the fledgling United Automobile Workers (UAW) against General Motors (GM), the world’s largest corporation. The strike began on December 30, 1936, when autoworkers refused to leave GM’s Fisher Body Number One plant, located in Flint, Michigan. For weeks the nation watched. To those sympathetic with labor’s goal of unionizing the auto industry, it was a story of David vs. Goliath. To those dedicated to the sanctity of property, the UAW posed a radical, revolutionary threat to industrial capitalism. What made the strike unique was the workers’ refusal to leave the plant. GM’s efforts to respond to the strike proved ineffective, and when violence erupted, Governor Frank Murphy sent in the National Guard to maintain the peace. Murphy then worked to bring both sides to the bargaining table. On February 11—with its auto production virtually halted—GM conceded and gave the UAW the right to organize its workers. Other auto companies soon caved in. The exception was the Ford Motor Company, which resisted the UAW until 1941. Labor began 1937 with high hopes, but few victories. By the end of the year—thanks to the sit-down strike—labor was firmly entrenched in Detroit and had become a powerful force in the auto industry and the city.



Last day of the Flint Sit-down Strike

10 Arsenal of Democracy

1935-1945

THE EARLY MONTHS of World War II did not go well for the United States. Yet, some Americans were confident of eventual success against the Germans and Japanese. One of these was Lt. General Brekon B. Somervell. Responsible for making sure the army had the necessary equipment to fight a war, Somervell reminded Americans that when Hitler “hitched his chariot to an internal combustion engine, he opened up a new battle front—a front that we know well. It’s called Detroit.”

“In a time of national emergency,” historian Larry Lankton has noted, “Americans expected a great deal from their auto industry.” During World War II “they got it.” The industry produced \$29 billion worth of war goods and accounted for 20 percent of America’s defense production. The auto industry produced many of the complex tools of war that contained thousands of precision-made parts. The list includes 4 million engines, 2.6 million trucks, nearly 50,000 tanks, 27,000 complete aircraft, 245 million shells and nearly six million guns. Hailed as the “lynch-pin of the Arsenal of Democracy,” Detroit, according to the *New York Times*, became “a city forging thunderbolts.”

The automakers were responsible for the production miracle that won World War II, but as the world raced toward war in the late 1930s, the auto industry, according to Lankton, “was more interested in leading the United States out of the Great Depression, than it was in leading Americans off to war.” After a decade of depression, car sales were up and the industry was reluctant to convert to military production. In 1940 the

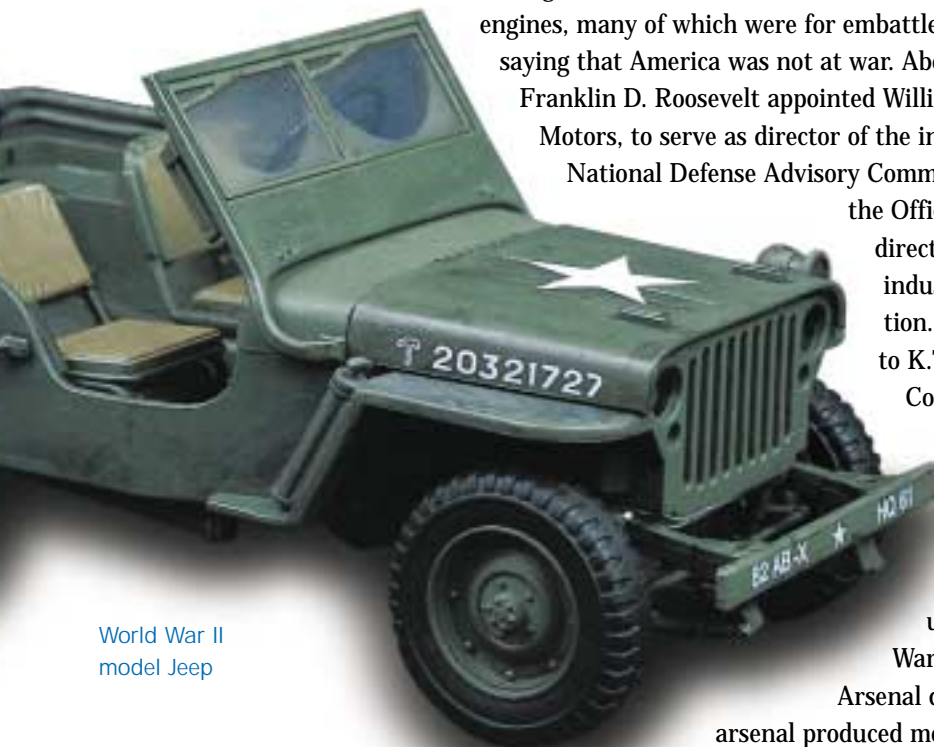
federal government asked the Ford Motor Company to produce six thousand aircraft engines, many of which were for embattled Great Britain. Henry Ford refused, saying that America was not at war. About the time Ford said “no,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed William S. Knudsen, the president of General Motors, to serve as director of the industrial production division of the National Defense Advisory Commission. In this job, and later as head of

the Office of Production Management, Knudsen directed the transformation of American industry from peacetime to wartime production. One of Knudsen’s first phone calls went to K.T. Keller, who headed the Chrysler Corporation. According to legend, Knudsen asked Keller if he could build tanks.

Keller confidently responded, “Yes,” then asked, “Where can I see one?”

On April 24, 1941, even as the massive, Albert Kahn-designed plant was under construction in a beet field near Warren, the newly dubbed Detroit Tank Arsenal delivered its first tank. By war’s end, the arsenal produced more than twenty-two thousand tanks.

Besides tanks, trucks and bombers, Michigan sent an estimated 670,000 men and women to the armed forces during World War II.



World War II
model Jeep

MIGRATION

Between 1910 and 1970, an estimated 6.5 million African Americans left the South and moved north. This “Great Migration” was caused by the hardships of sharecropping in the rural South and the attraction of a better life in the industrial North. For blacks who endured political, social and economic oppression in the South, the North looked like the Promised Land. Wages were substantially higher and there were fewer laws segregating the races. There were no poll taxes or literacy tests to prevent blacks from voting. Racial prejudice existed in the North, but African Americans did not suffer the constant fear of humiliation and degradation they experienced in the South. At the outbreak of World War I, six thousand blacks lived in Detroit. By 1920 the city’s black population exceeded forty thousand. In the early 1940s an estimated fifty thousand African Americans moved to Michigan to work in the factories building war materiel. As African Americans settled in Michigan, they soon realized that equal rights, most notably fair and equal housing and schools, did not exist in Detroit, which was a model of racial segregation. Furthermore, as tens of thousands of southern whites moved into southeastern Michigan, hatemongers stirred up traditional racial fears. During the war—as black Americans fought for democracy—African Americans spoke out against inequality. The Detroit chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People declared that the issue of civil rights “must be raised now.” In August 1942 *Life* magazine published an article entitled, “Detroit is Dynamite,” noting the growing racial problems in the Motor City. For over a year blacks and whites clashed in schools, factories and on the streets. The situation deteriorated to a point where one federal agency predicted that unless the president acted quickly “hell would be let loose” in the Motor City. No action was taken and in June 1943 a racially motivated civil disorder left thirty-four people dead. Detroit officials blamed African Americans and made little attempt to address the problems that had caused one of the nation’s worst civil disorders.

TRUCKS, TANKS AND BOMBERS

The numbers of tanks, trucks and bombers produced by the American automobile industry during World War II are staggering. Michigan’s best-known wartime achievement was the Willow Run Bomber Plant built by the Ford Motor Company near Ypsilanti. Although Henry Ford initially opposed peacetime military production, in early 1941 he proposed building a factory where one heavy bomber could be mass produced every sixty minutes. The federal government agreed, and in April 1941 construction began on the largest assembly plant built up to that time. No single American industrial operation received more attention than Ford’s bomber plant. Hailed as one of the seven wonders of the world, Willow Run was described as “the damnest colossus the industrial world has ever known.” But Willow Run had its critics, especially since the first B-24 bomber was not finished until September 1942. By war’s end, the tens of thousands of workers at Willow Run delivered over 8,500 bombers.



Willow Run B-24 Bomber Plant

ROSIE THE RIVETER

With tens of thousands of men going off to war, American industry turned to women to help fill its wartime contracts for tanks, trucks and bombers. Rosie the Riveter became part of a government-sponsored advertising campaign that recognized the contributions women made during the war. At least half the women who worked in wartime industry had never worked out of the home before. The peak of women’s wartime employment came in 1944 when females represented one-third of the nation’s manufacturing labor force. In Michigan, an estimated two hundred thousand women worked in the state’s auto plants during the war.

11 Modern Michigan

1945 - PRESENT

AS WORLD WAR II ENDED, Detroit prepared for a postwar boom in the nation's demand for cars. Although advance planning helped speed conversion of war plants to civilian production, automakers struggled to meet this demand. By the end of 1945 they could provide only two new cars to each of the nation's thirty-three thousand dealers. Full capacity did not return to the auto industry until 1949. Besides the growth of the state's automobile industry, the postwar period saw the emergence of several of the state's most prominent twentieth-century politicians.

In 1948 G. Mennen "Soapy" Williams, the thirty-seven-year-old heir to the Mennen toiletries fortune, was elected Democratic governor of Michigan. Born in



G. Mennen "Soapy" Williams

Detroit, Williams served six consecutive, two-year terms—the most of any Michigan governor.

Famous for his green-and-white bow tie, Williams convinced labor to support the Democratic party, establishing a solid relationship that changed the face of that political party. A supporter of education, Williams is credited with modernizing the public school system. Williams also got the Mackinac Bridge built. He actively supported the civil rights movement, which may have kept him from being asked to join John F. Kennedy on the 1960 Democratic presidential ticket. Williams did not seek a seventh term. Instead, he served as the assistant secretary of state for African Affairs for the Kennedy administration. He later was elected to the Michigan Supreme Court, where he served as chief justice.

When Williams left center stage he was replaced by George Romney.

President and chairman of the newly created American Motors

Corporation in 1954. Romney became a major public figure as a member of Citizens for Michigan, which lobbied that a new state constitution had to be written. Voters agreed and delegates were elected. Beginning in April 1961, they met and wrote the state's current constitution, which received voter approval on April 1, 1963. The new constitution streamlined government bureaucracy, introduced a state income tax and lengthened the term of office for governor to four years. In 1962, Romney, who served as a vice president of the constitutional convention, was elected the Republican governor of Michigan. By 1967 Romney was a leading candidate for his party's presidential nomination.

However, the civil disorder in Detroit that year and a comment he made about being brainwashed about American involvement in the Vietnam War removed him from serious presidential consideration.

Romney's successor was William B. Milliken, who served fourteen years as governor. The state's other prominent politician during the 1970s and 1980s was Coleman Young who was elected mayor of Detroit in 1974. The first African American to head Michigan's largest city, Young was reelected three times.

In 1973 Congressman Gerald R. Ford of Grand Rapids was tapped to replace Spiro Agnew, who had resigned the vice presidency in disgrace. A year later, Vice President Ford became the nation's thirty-eighth president when Richard Nixon resigned rather than face impeachment over his involvement in the Watergate affair. The only Michiganian to serve as president of the United States, Ford restored public confidence in the presidency.



George Romney



Coleman A. Young



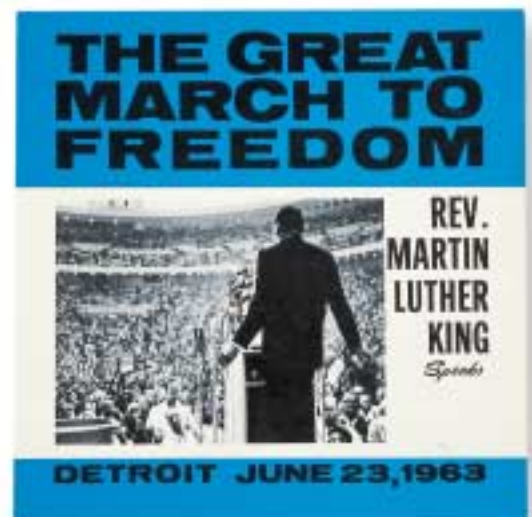
Gerald R. Ford

MACKINAC BRIDGE

Many said it couldn't be built, but in November 1957 the Mackinac Bridge opened, linking the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. For years, many Michiganders had talked about building such a bridge. The state operated a car ferry, but during the peak periods of tourist and hunting seasons, motorists waited hours to cross the Straits of Mackinac. Governor G. Mennen Williams appointed former U.S. senator Prentiss M. Brown chairman of the Mackinac Bridge Authority. After "a long and enormously complicated struggle," a reluctant state legislature supported building a bridge. Construction was funded by \$99.8 million in revenue bonds to be paid off by tolls collected from those crossing the bridge. The bridge was designed by David B. Steinman and construction began in 1954. The central suspension span, extending 3,800 feet between the main towers that rise 552 feet above the water, was the second longest such span in the world. The total length of the bridge between the cable anchorages is 8,614 feet, leading to the claim that the Mackinac Bridge was the longest suspension bridge in the world—a claim that has been disputed. The Big Mac, as it is commonly called, is one of Michigan's best-known attractions. It is also the host of the Labor Day Bridge Walk, which draws sixty thousand participants annually.

DETROIT'S FREEDOM MARCH

On June 23, 1963, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King was in Detroit for the city's "Great March to Freedom." The nation's largest civil rights gathering up to that time, an estimated 125,000 people marched down Woodward Avenue to Jefferson Avenue, carrying placards and singing "We Shall Overcome." Recalling recent attacks African Americans had suffered during similar protests in Alabama, Detroit police commissioner George Edwards reassured King that, "You'll find no dogs and fire hoses here." The march ended at Cobo Hall where King introduced his "I have a dream" speech. Two months later, King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, and delivered a similar speech that became one of the greatest moments in American civil rights history.



Recording of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Detroit speech

THE BOTTLE BILL

Michigan has the distinction of being the first industrial state to enact a beverage container deposit law and the first—and only—state to set the deposit at 10 cents. In 1965 the first bottle bill was introduced in the Michigan legislature. Bills were introduced every year for nine years, but the lobbying efforts of the beverage industry prevented a hearing. In 1973 Governor William Milliken endorsed the bill. Despite popular support for the bill that ranged up to 85 percent, the bill remained "bottled up" in the House Appropriations Committee. This prompted the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) to lead a petition drive placing the measure (soon known as "the bottle bill") on the November 1976 ballot. In one of the most successful petition drives in Michigan history, the MUCC collected 400,000 signatures—nearly double the required number—in six weeks. Despite strong opposition from a coalition called the Committee Against Forced Deposits, the measure passed with 64 percent of the vote. The law went into effect on December 3, 1978. The bottle bill greatly reduced roadside litter, and according to the Center for Marine Conservation, Michigan consistently has the nation's lowest percentage of bottle and can litter on its beaches.

RESOURCES for learning & sharing Michigan history



Michigan Historical Museum
in Lansing

FIELD TRIPS

1. Every year over 100,000 fourth graders travel to Lansing for a combined tour of the **State Capitol** building and the **Michigan Historical Museum**. At the museum, students can learn about Michigan's entire history, from prehistoric times through the twentieth century. Groups should plan a minimum of two hours for the museum visit. Teachers must reserve a visit time for groups of ten or more in advance by calling the Capitol Tour Guide and Information Service at (517) 373-2353.

Eight other facilities of the state museum system are sprinkled throughout the Lower and Upper Peninsulas. All welcome school groups, although times are limited to late spring and early fall for most. Admission is free to all state museums and the State Capitol. For information about tours at any of these museums, contact the Michigan Historical Center, 717 West Allegan Street, Lansing, MI 48918. Telephone (517) 373-3559, TDD: (800) 827-7007. Visit on-line at www.sos.state.mi.us/history/.

2. The **Michigan Iron Industry Museum** is located in the Marquette Iron Range near the site of the first iron forge in the Lake Superior region. Today, museum exhibits and outdoor interpretive paths depict the large-scale capital and human investment that made Michigan an industrial leader. The museum is located eight miles west of Marquette, on Forge Road off County Road 492, and is open May 1 through October 31. For information telephone (906) 475-7857.

3. **Fort Wilkins** was once an active U.S. Army post built to keep peace in Michigan's Copper Country. Today there are nineteen restored buildings and many costumed interpreters in the summer. Nearby is the Copper Harbor Lighthouse museum. The site is open from mid-May through mid-October and is located one mile east of Copper Harbor at the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula in Fort Wilkins State Park. For information telephone (906) 289-4215, or contact the Michigan Iron Industry Museum, (906) 475-7857.



Fort Wilkins in Copper Harbor

4. **Fayette Historic Townsite** was once one of the Upper Peninsula's most productive iron-smelting operations. Fayette grew up after the Civil War when nearly five hundred people lived in and near the town that existed to make pig iron. Fayette Historic Townsite is located between Escanaba and Manistique, seventeen miles south of U.S. 2 on the Garden Peninsula and is open mid-May through mid-September. For information telephone (906) 644-2603, TDD (800) 827-7007.

5. **Hartwick Pines Logging Museum** is situated among the towering trees of one of Michigan's largest remaining stands of virgin white pine. Within the forest visitor center and logging camp buildings, exhibits and period rooms tell the stories of the loggers, rivermen and entrepreneurs who powered Michigan's logging industry. The museum is located in Hartwick Pines State Park, eight miles northeast of Grayling on M-93. From I-75 take exit 259. For information telephone (517) 348-7068 or TDD (800) 827-7007.

6. The **Civilian Conservation Corps Museum** houses photographs and artifacts donated by Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) alumni. In an effort to "put Americans back to work" during the Great Depression, the CCC enrolled over 100,000 young Michigan men to perform a variety of conservation and reforestation projects. The museum is located in North Higgins Lake State Park, fifteen miles south of Grayling along Roscommon Road. Exit from I-75 or U.S. 27. The museum is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Telephone (517) 373-3559 or TDD (800) 827-7007.

7. The late-Victorian **Mann House** features eight rooms of period furniture and artifacts. Restored flower and herb gardens and a carriage house with carriages, sleighs and other exhibits illustrate the way Michigianians worked and played in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Mann House is located at 205 Hanover Street in Concord, twelve miles west of Jackson. For information telephone Patrick Murphy at the Michigan Historical Museum, (517) 373-1979.

8. At **Sanilac Petroglyphs**, rock carvings were rediscovered after massive forest fires swept the Lower Peninsula in 1881. Native Americans created this artwork 300 to 1,000 years ago. Located near Cass City, the petroglyphs are open Memorial Day through Labor Day. Take M-53 to Bay City-Forestville Road, proceed east to Germania Road and turn south, travel a half mile to the parking lot located on the west side of Germania Road. Telephone (517) 373-1979, (517) 373-3559 or TDD (800) 827-7007.

9. From 1836 through 1855, a favorite stopping place to change horses, relax, enjoy a meal or spend the night was **Walker Tavern**. Today, exhibits at the historic site interpret Michigan's frontier settlement and stagecoach era. The tavern, visitors center and reproduction barn offer exhibits about the people who traveled the cross-roads at Cambridge Junction. Walker Tavern is located in the Irish Hills region, thirty-five miles west of Ann Arbor, at the junction of U.S. 12 and M-50. It is open Memorial Day through Labor Day and the remainder of the year by special appointment. For information telephone (517) 467-4401 or TDD (800) 827-7007.



WEB STUFF

■ The Michigan Historical Center web page is a great resource for teachers and students, offering lesson plans, Michigan facts, kids' activities and on-line exhibits: www.sos.state.mi.us/history/.

■ The "Kids Discover Michigan" web page from the Department of State has lots of fun facts and games involving Michigan: www.sos.state.mi.us/kidspage.

■ The Michigan Department of Agriculture has a "Kid's Corner" web page. The site's stories, games and an on-line state fair are great ways to learn about crops and food grown in Michigan: www.mda.state.mi.us/kids/index.html.

TEACHING with Artifacts

WHAT IS AN ARTIFACT? An artifact is any object that is a product of human workmanship. What can teachers do with it? They can bring history into the classroom and let kids get their hands on a piece of the past. Using objects as learning tools can help students make connections between their personal experience and history concepts.

What you need:

- Teachers can use the real thing or a reproduction, like the miniaturized birchbark canoe shown here. Students may be encouraged to bring in and present an artifact of their own.
- Equipment for artifact investigation may include a ruler, a camera, cloth gloves (if the artifact is made of organic material), a pencil and paper for making sketches and taking notes.

Method:

1. **Description:** Do a thorough and objective inventory of the physical features. List and describe everything you see. Look at the colors, shapes, lines, textures, size, materials used, age, etc. Does the object have a smell? Does it make a sound? Is it a natural substance or was it manufactured?
2. **Analysis:** See how the object is organized. How is it put together? What is emphasized? Is it complete? Explore design principles such as balance, rhythm, repetition, focal point, unity, etc.
3. **Interpretation:** Based on what you have discovered in Steps One and Two, think about the purpose and/or meaning of the object. Put the pieces of the puzzle together to form your own interpretation. Your own base of knowledge will help you in the process. Think about its function . . . what was/is it for, how has it been used, has the use changed over time?
4. **Judgment:** Now that you have considered all of the above, what do you think of this object? What value was it to the people who made it, who used it, and for those who now keep it?



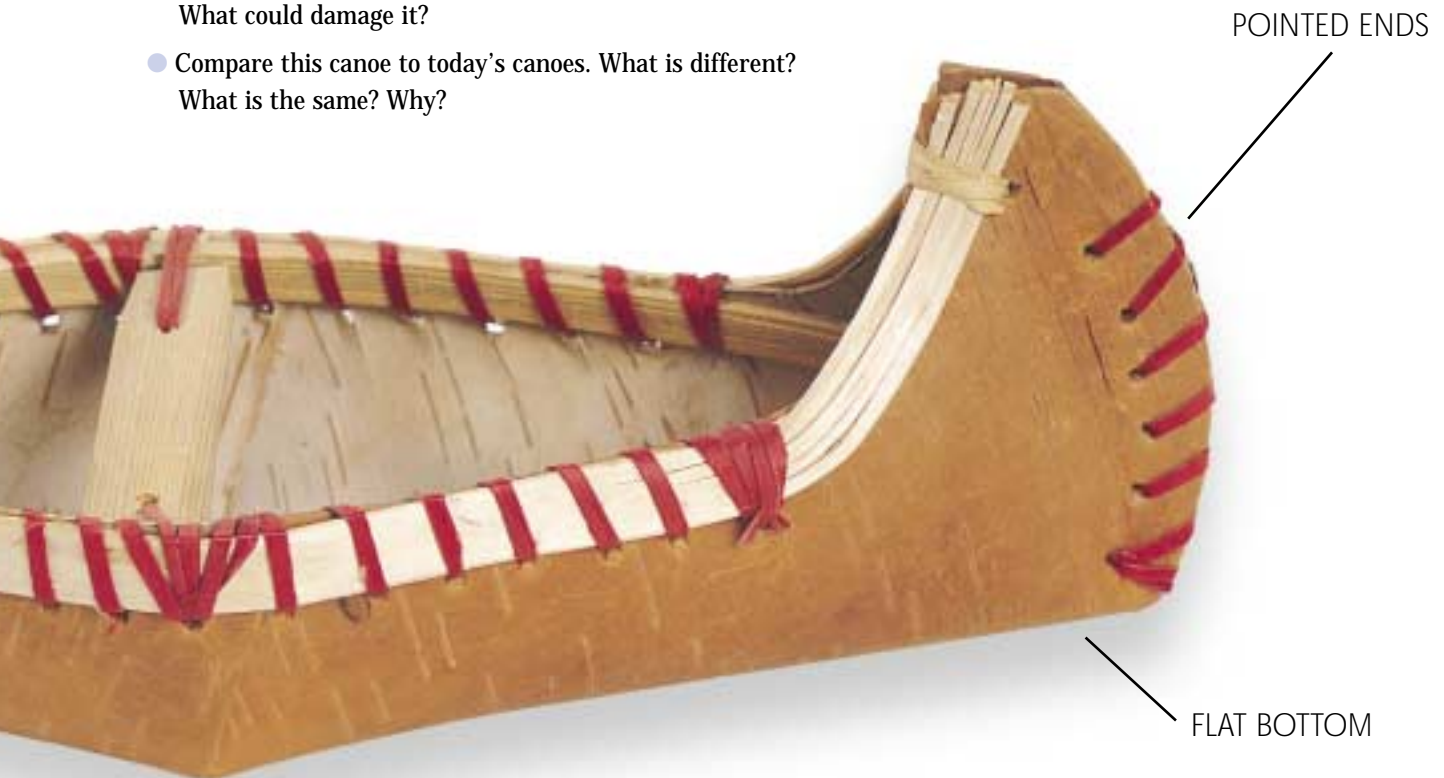
Objectives:

- Learn about the people and cultures that made and used the artifact. *Social Studies Standard II.1 (People, Places and Cultures)*
- Strengthen observation skills. *Social Studies Standard V.1 (Information Processing)*
- Examine the purposes of the object and its significance. *Social Studies Standard V.2 (Conducting Investigations)*
- Understand the history of progress of man-made items and how material items define the way people live. *Social Studies Standard I.2 (Comprehending The Past) and Standard I.3 (Analyzing and Interpreting the Past)*
- Gain an appreciation for objects as keys to the past and encourage students to maintain their own collections and care for valuable objects.

Example: A birchbark canoe can be used to teach about the French era, *voyageurs* and the fur trade, early maritime transportation and regional material resources. Photograph or have students sketch the object, then label the image with their observations. For a related art activity, students could make their own birchbark canoe.

Discussion questions:

- What did the canoe hold?
- Consider the characteristics of the birchbark canoe: lightweight, pointed ends, flat bottom, oblong, large interior. What is the benefit of each of these attributes?
- What water conditions was the boat made for?
- How could the boat be waterproofed?
- How durable is the birchbark canoe? How do you know? What could damage it?
- Compare this canoe to today's canoes. What is different? What is the same? Why?



A wonderful tool to help you teach

EACH ISSUE of *Michigan History* magazine is full of fascinating articles to provide you with more knowledge to share with your students. The stories give a human-interest side to history, which will keep your kids' attention and increase their interest in learning. The variety of stories will provide topic ideas for lessons and discussions.

Add *Michigan History* magazine to your in-room reference library. It is a great resource for students' research assignments and the magazines are timely for many years. In fact, they're designed to never become outdated.

Even though the magazine is geared towards adult readers, here are some of the ways you can use *Michigan History* magazine to teach your fourth grade class:

- Supplement each history lesson with a story about Michigan history.
- Read excerpts from several stories in an issue. Help your class create a timeline for the events in each magazine.
- Use stories as a lead to assignments: have students interview older relatives or find out about historical events in their own town or families.
- After reading an article, start a discussion about that time period—what were the people like, what music was popular, what did they drive, what other world events were occurring?
- Share the colorful photos and illustrations with your class.
- Have students draw a picture of a story you've read from the magazine.
- Share the photos of artifacts. Have your students find their own "artifacts" and bring them in.
- Read an article to your students. Have them compare and contrast the story with current events.
- Read half of a story. Have students write, draw or act out how they think it will end before reading the rest.
- Put students in the life of those in the articles. Divide them into groups of 3-4 and have them act out a story after you read it.
- Read an article to your class. Have the students use the Internet and library to further research that event or time period.
- After reading a political or humorous story, invite students to draw an editorial cartoon or caricature relating to the article.

By ordering a subscription to *Michigan History*, you will not only discover more about our great state, but you will have an invaluable teaching tool to help your students learn as well.

To find out more about *Michigan History* magazine and our other publications, visit our web site at www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag. If you wish to order a subscription, you can do so on-line, or by calling 1-800-366-3703. (Reference #MH4KIDS)

