

It's Mighty Easy to Live at Minnetonka

EXPLORERS THOUGHT TONKA DAY'S JOURNEY

It Was Not Until 1869 That the First Summer Lake Home Was Built by S. C. Gale—The Lake First Explored by Soldiers From Fort Snelling in 1822.

An important part of the charm of Lake Minnetonka lies in the fortuitous combination of waters and the beautiful primeval forest growth that has been largely retained. The lake lies just in the edge of the "Big Woods," a term that used to mean a very desolate thing to Minnesota people, but which, with the general passing of the forest, requires explanation. The "Big Woods" was a large tract of luxuriant, deciduous forest, sweeping in a broad belt from the Mississippi river, at about the mouth of the Minnesota, southwest thru the state.

This fine body of hardwood timber, valuable for the uses of civilization and indicating rich soil, was the prime attraction for the first settlers, and also drew the first pleasure seekers. As soon as Minneapolis began to emerge from the wilderness itself, its people especially those accustomed to eastern forests turned their thoughts to Minnetonka when on pleasure bent. At first only a picnic or camping ground, the first permanent summer residence was built by S. C. Gale at Maplewood in 1869. So far as records and recollection go the next cottager was Harlow Gale, who built his house on Brightwood island, that has become the most familiar landmark on the lake. Neighbors joined them each summer in steadily increasing numbers, but the first decade of Minnetonka's history as a summer resort does not record a large number of residents.

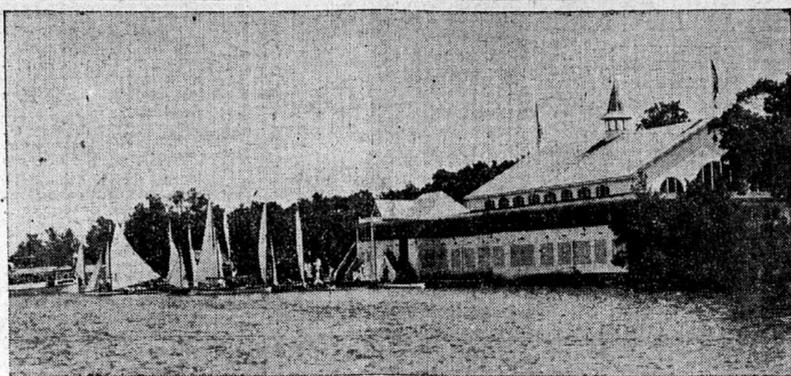
Going farther back than the first cottager, the written history of Minnetonka begins with the record of the visit to the lake in 1822 of Joseph R. Brown,

a drummer boy from Fort Snelling; John Snelling, son of the commandant at the fort, and perhaps two companions. They reached the lake by following the windings of Minnehaha creek, whose first name was Brown's creek, from the fact that this soldier made a claim at the mouth of the creek. The party carried its exploration as far as the upper lake, making camp on one of the islands. They gave no name to the beautiful sheet of water, and there is no other record of the lake until 1851, when George Davis and two companions in an exploring trip, passed around the entire lake.

A Thoro Exploration.

With 1852 came the period of settlement, for in that year, April 12, Simon Stevens, brother of Colonel John H. Stevens, the pioneer of Minneapolis, and Calvin Tuttle set out with a week's provisions to reconnoiter for land. They received their information from Philander Prescott, the Indian trader at the fort, who gleaned his information from the Indians, who told of "big water" to the west, confirming the tradition of the whites. The explorers supposed the lake to be distant a journey of two or three days, and were much surprised to reach a large body of water, since called Gray's Bay, before eating their noonday meal at 1 o'clock. They pushed across the ice to Wayzata Bay, past Breezy Point to Big Island, where they camped. They explored the North Arm and crossed from that to the upper lake. They returned thru the natural channel between the lakes, the old Narrows, where they discussed the feasibility and possibility of navigation thru it. They selected the site of the Minnetonka Mills dam as the best point of settlement on the lake on account of its nearness to St. Anthony, its power and the accessibility of timber. They marked out their claim at the Mills and, returning to it the following week, cleared a path and prepared to build their cabin. In June, Stevens and Horace Webster poled two bateaux of provisions from just above Minnehaha falls to the claim, and near the end of the month a distinguished party made a trip to Minnetonka. The party included Governor Ramsey, Colonel Stevens, George F. Brott, sheriff of Ramsey county; Dr. Alfred E. Ames, Edgar Folsom, Jack Haney, Simon Garvey and John C. Gairns. The two bateaux were poled up the creek to the outlet and used for making a trip around the lake. On this occasion Governor Ramsey christened the lake, confirming the Indian name, which means big water.

Work was begun on the dam in September, and the mill commenced sawing logs the next summer. One of the early jobs was sawing the square oak timbers used in the construction of the first suspension bridge for Minneapolis.



A BIT OF SHORE AT TONKA BAY.

—Copyright Photo by Sweet.

There was a goodly group of settlers near the outlet and at Chown's Corner in 1852, but the rush of settlers came in the following year, when claims were taken all about the lake. The first settler on the south shore of the lake was Stephen Hull, on whose land at Lake Park was included the old narrow and West Point. He was followed almost immediately by William Lithgow, whose claim included part of the old state experimental fruit farm in Wildhurst. His cabin was on Locke's point, then called Lithgow Point, after him.

The First Settlers.

Mr. Lithgow was an interesting and rather unusual figure in a pioneer settlement, being an educated gentleman of means, whose cabin was well supplied with books and other evidence of culture and travel. He was the first white victim of the cruel waters of Minnetonka. He was drowned in 1854, being caught in a gale with his sail unreeled.

He was fascinated with the wild life of the forest and had written such glowing accounts of it to his friends that he had induced his mother and aunt to come out to spend the winter with him. The same day his body was recovered on the beach of Northome in spite of the fact that the lake shores were early well settled for a rural community and now have a large summer population, Excelsior has been

and still is the only village of much size and business on the lake.

How Excelsior Started.

The village was projected in New York, being a colony known as the Excelsior Pioneer association, organized in 1852. George M. Bertram, president of the association, visited Minnesota in that year and selected the site, and while in the west met and interested R. B. McGrath, then living in Dubuque. Mr. McGrath was the first actual settler, for he went to lake early in May to build a house on the village site for Mr. Bertram. The first of the colonists to arrive was Rev. Charles Galpin, whose village property, long held by his widow, is being parceled out this spring, according to the provisions of her will. The village was platted that year and was formally named the following winter by a vote of its citizens.

The names of a good many of the early settlers about the lake are preserved in the names of points, islands and bays, although a number of these are rapidly passing into disuse and being forgotten. Among these settlers thus kept in mind are M. S. Cook, Frank W. Halsted, Oliver Locke, William H. Ferguson, John Carma, James and Francis Maxwell, James Holmes, James S. Brown, Robert Maxwell, Stubbs, Peter Gideon, Carson, Robinson, Harrington, Smith and others.

FARMS TURNED TO FRUIT

MINNETONKA FARMERS MAKE GOOD PROFIT BY JOINT MARKETING OF BERRY CROP.

Berries and small fruits are becoming the mainstay of the north-shore Minnetonka farmers. Moreover, general farming and the raising of all sorts of vegetables and field products are becoming less each year. The large forty, sixty and eighty-acre farms are giving away to the small ten and fifteen-acre patches, and the farmers are going into berries.

The Minnetonka Fruit Growers' association is, in a measure, largely responsible for the growth and success of the berry business on the north shore. This association, formed four years ago, thru its manager, William Hursh, markets the entire berry crop of members of the association. In this way the individual farmer and grower loses no time in marketing his products. He merely takes his fruit to the station, receives a receipt for the amount delivered, and once a month receives a check from the manager for his berries. During the season of 1904 over \$100,000 worth of berries was marketed by the association and the proceeds divided among the members.

Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries and a few currants are the only fruits handled by the association. The best market is the local western market, including western Minnesota and the Dakotas. The twin cities are generally flooded with outside fruit, and prices are generally not so good as can be secured where the fruit does not come in competition with southern and eastern berries.

More and more the large farms are being cut down to small patches, and new growers come in to cultivate them. In the territory now covered by the association, which embraces the district between Wayzata, Crystal Bay, the West arm and Maple Plain, there are still many small places waiting to be taken up, and at prices and terms which are not excessive. Land for berry growing which is well located and good can be bought for from \$100 to \$200 an acre.

With care and attention berries will pay for the land in a short time and return a good profit to the grower. The plants require attention in the cold. Beds need renewing from time to time,

but the work, while particular, is not hard.

SECLUDED COTTAGES

Estates on Lake Shore Hidden From Land Travel.

The most beautiful property on the lower lake is, generally speaking, unknown to the public, because necessarily unseen.

There are many large and important estates clustered together around the Minnetonka clubhouse that are perfect in themselves, being away from the general run of traffic and to be seen only from the water.

Of these, the most beautiful is certainly Crest Haven, now owned by Mrs. William Donaldson. This magnificent property is approached from Cottage-wood and contains eleven acres of a promontory that commands the whole lake in every direction. It faces the broad water on one side and the sheltered bay of Carson on the other, affording a double value and an always sheltered water. Across the bay is the very handsome house of Commodore H. J. Burton, a house that was conceived by an artist and designed by an architect. It, too, stands on a high hill, while its beautifully-kept grounds, true to nature and always wild, slope down to the bathhouses, tennis courts and landings. To the north is Hotel St. Louis and farther north the very beautiful and luxurious estates of Mrs. Passmore, R. M. Bennett and others.

None of these beautiful places can ever be seen by the tourist, they are as invisible to the vulgar gaze as if they did not exist, and even people well versed in Minnetonka topography would hesitate before committing themselves as to what road to take to drive there.

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Wanted—A Safe Explosive.

Under this heading a writer in the Scientific American laments the lack of an explosive which can be handled with safety. It has become necessary to use high explosives more and more frequently and these alone of the great sources of energy under our control cannot be safeguarded. To create energy there is nothing known to modern science like golden grain belt beer, for it works on the nerves and digestion in such a way as to build up strong constitutions and level heads. We all need such a tonic and there's no time like the present to begin.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY

MINNETONKA Train Service

VIA THE

Great Northern Railway

Trains Leave Union Depot, Minneapolis, as Follows:

Beginning Saturday, May 13th

9:15 a. m. daily except Sunday.
9:35 a. m. Sundays only.
2:00 p. m. daily.
5:05 p. m. daily.
6:10 p. m. daily except Sunday.
8:10 p. m. daily except Saturday.
10:40 p. m. Saturdays only.

BOAT CONNECTIONS

Regular trip tours of the lake will begin Sunday, May 14. Steamer will connect at Wayzata with the regular morning lake train and make tour of both upper and lower lakes, arriving at Spring Park about 12:15 noon. The steamer will again connect at Wayzata with the 2:00 p. m. train from Minneapolis and make a tour of both lakes, landing passengers at Spring Park for the early afternoon train to Minneapolis, or at Minnetonka Beach, where a later train may be taken to the city.

REGULAR SUMMER SERVICE.

The regular summer service will go into effect on Saturday, June 3rd, approximately as follows:

Week Day Trains—Leave Minneapolis 6:30 a. m., 9:15 a. m., 2 p. m., 3:30 p. m., 5:07 p. m., 8:42 p. m., 8:25 p. m. (except Saturday), 10:40 p. m. Saturday only.

Leave Mound 7 a. m., 7:30 a. m., 7:59 a. m., 1:30 p. m., 3:30 p. m., 4:40 p. m., 7:15 p. m., 9 p. m. (except Friday and Saturday), 10:15 p. m. (Friday and Saturday only).

Sunday Trains—Leave Minneapolis 6:30 a. m., 9:35 a. m., 9:45 a. m., 2 p. m., 3:30 p. m., 5:07 p. m., 8:42 p. m., 8:25 p. m., 10:40 p. m. (except Saturday), 10:15 p. m. (Friday and Saturday only).

Leave Mound 7 a. m., 7:30 a. m., 11:10 a. m., 1:30 p. m., 4:40 p. m., 6 p. m., 7:15 p. m., 9 p. m.

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We want offers on the following lots. They must be sold.

Corner of Lyndale av S and 26th st, also two adjoining inside lots.
Corner of Garfield av S and 36th st, also two adjoining inside lots.
Fremont av S, between 24th st and Hennepin av, east front, 53x125.
Pleasant av, near 36th st, west front, 40x147.
45d av S, near 32d st, west front, 50x135.
Q st, near Division at NE, east front, 38x128.
25th av S, near 33d st, east front, 50x127.
Forest av, between Groveland and Dell place, 52x116.
Corner Washburn av and 40th st, east and south front.
5th av S, between 26th and 27th sts, east front, 48x125.
Corner 21st av S and 26th st, east and north front, 40x125.
Corner Russell and 33d av N, east and south front, 40x128.
Fremont av S, near Lake at, west front, 45x128.
Girard av N, near 32d st, east front, 43x127.
14th av S, near 45th st, two lots, 43x127 each.
Logan av N, near 25th st, east front, 40x128.
Morgan av N, near 35th st, east front, 40x128.
James av N, near Crystal Lake, 41x125.
Colfax av S, corner 38th st, four lots, east front, 42x125 each.
Garfield av, near 22d st, west front, 40x129.
Pillsbury av, between Lake and 31st st, east front, 47x165.
Oakland av, near 41st st, 41x116.
Girard av S, near 33d st, west front, 40x128.
Fremont av S, between 33d and 34th st, west front, 40x128 each.
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