

The Story Of Resource Exploitation In Upper Michigan Focus On Sault Sainte



Upper Michigan is a region known for its natural beauty, lush forests, and abundant resources. One particular area that has played a significant role in resource exploitation is Sault Sainte, located in Chippewa County. The story of resource exploitation in Upper Michigan is a fascinating one, filled with triumphs and challenges that have shaped the region's history and economy.

Discovery of Resources

The journey of resource exploitation in Upper Michigan began with the discovery of valuable minerals and timber. In the mid-19th century, prospectors and loggers flocked to the region in search of copper, iron ore, and vast timber reserves. The Sault Sainte area, with its proximity to the Great Lakes and dense forests, offered an ideal location for resource extraction.



U.P. Colony: The Story of Resource Exploitation in Upper Michigan -- Focus on Sault Sainte Marie

Industries by Jasmine Lee-Jones (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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As mining operations expanded, companies established mining towns near the deposits. People from all walks of life, including immigrants from Europe and local Native American tribes, flocked to these towns for employment opportunities. The demand for resources was insatiable, and Sault Sainte became a bustling hub of activity.

The Copper Boom

During the mid-19th century, copper mining became the dominant industry in Upper Michigan. The Keweenaw Peninsula, which lies to the west of Sault Sainte, was rich in copper deposits, attracting countless miners and investors. The mining boom brought prosperity to the region, leading to the development of infrastructure and the growth of towns and cities.

However, the copper industry faced numerous challenges. Labor disputes, economic downturns, and the eventual depletion of high-grade copper deposits

led to a decline in production. The once flourishing mining towns saw a gradual decline in population and economic activity.

Iron Ore Extraction

As copper mining waned, the focus shifted towards iron ore extraction. Iron ore deposits were abundant in Upper Michigan, and Sault Sainte became a vital transportation hub for shipping the ore to other parts of the country. The development of railroads and shipping ports contributed to the growth of Sault Sainte as a center for iron ore production.

The iron ore industry experienced several booms and busts over the years. During World War II, iron ore demand skyrocketed, leading to a resurgence in mining operations. However, as the war ended, the demand decreased, resulting in the closure of many mines. Today, iron ore mining in Upper Michigan continues, but on a much smaller scale.

The Impact on the Environment

Resource exploitation in Upper Michigan has had both positive and negative impacts on the environment. While it played a significant role in the region's economic development, it also led to deforestation, habitat destruction, and water pollution.

The once sprawling forests that surrounded Sault Sainte were heavily logged, providing timber for construction, railways, and mining operations. This deforestation resulted in the loss of biodiversity and disrupted the ecological balance of the region.

Mining operations also had a significant impact on the environment. Open-pit mining methods led to the formation of vast craters, altering the landscape

permanently. Additionally, the release of harmful chemicals and waste materials during the extraction process contaminated the nearby water bodies.

Preservation and Conservation Efforts

Recognizing the importance of preserving the region's natural resources, organizations and governments have implemented various conservation efforts. Protected areas, such as national parks and wilderness reserves, have been established to safeguard the remaining forests, lakes, and wildlife.

Educational initiatives have also been implemented to create awareness about sustainable resource management. Efforts to restore and rehabilitate areas affected by mining have been ongoing, with the aim of reestablishing a balanced ecosystem and promoting ecological diversity.

The Legacy of Resource Exploitation

The story of resource exploitation in Upper Michigan has left a lasting legacy. It shaped the region's history, economy, and culture. The abandoned mining towns, unique geological formations, and remnants of infrastructure stand as reminders of the tremendous impact of resource extraction.

Today, Upper Michigan embraces its natural beauty and resources while striving to strike a balance between economic development and environmental preservation. Sustainable practices are being encouraged to ensure the long-term viability of resource exploitation in the region.

In

The story of resource exploitation in Upper Michigan, focusing on the Sault Sainte area, highlights the triumphs and challenges associated with extracting valuable

minerals and timber. It shaped the history and economy of the region, leaving behind a legacy that continues to impact the present.



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In the 1980s, Phil Bellfy pondered the question: Why does Sault, Ontario, appear to be so prosperous, while the "Sault" on the American side has fallen into such a deplorable state? Could the answer be that the "American side" was little more than a "resource colony"-or to use the academic jargon of "Conflict and Change" Sociology-an "Internal Colony." In UP Colony, Bellfy revisits his graduate research to update us the state of the Sault.

The ultimate question: why has the U.P.'s vast wealth, nearly unrivaled in the whole of the United States, left the area with poverty nearly unrivaled in the whole of the United States? None of the conventional explanations from "distance to markets," to "too many people," to "disadvantageous production costs," have any credibility. Simply put: "Where did the \$1.5 billion earned from copper mining, \$1 billion from logging, and nearly \$4 billion in iron ore go?"

To get to the bottom of these thorny questions, Bellfy looks at the possible

economic pressures imposed by "external colonial powers." The pressure-points examined in this book include presence of a complimentary economy, lopsided investment in one sector, monopoly style management, disparity of living standards, a repressive conflict-resolution system, and the progressive growth of inequality over time.

In UP Colony, Dr. Bellfy has revisited his MA Thesis and brought this analysis up-to-date in conjunction with the Sault's Semiseptcentennial-the 350th anniversary of its French founding in 1668.

"In the 1980s the author headed north and attended Lake Superior State University at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. As a student he was struck by the differences between the sister cities on either side of the St. Mary's River. The American Soo was clearly in decline while the Canadian Soo prospered. The question why turned into a master's thesis that grew to include an examination of the economic woes of Michigan's U.P. This short book includes the original thesis and a 20-year update of the manuscript. For a book of only 70 pages, it is filled with eye-opening facts that clearly show that the U.P. was treated as if it was no better than a colony in which the colonizing country systematically exploited its enormous wealth then left it one of the most poverty-stricken areas in the country." --Tom Powers, Michigan in Books

"There are many people who will benefit from reading this book: academic readers and researchers; nonfiction writers working on similar themes; and more "creative" authors who want to get the facts straight, whatever their projects. The extensive bibliography will be helpful to many of these readers, too. UP Colony is a fairly quick read and easy to follow with its typical academic format of stating a premise/theory, organizing the points of the argument, supporting that argument with facts and statistics, and finally drawing a ." -- Deborah K. Frontiera, U.P.

Book Review

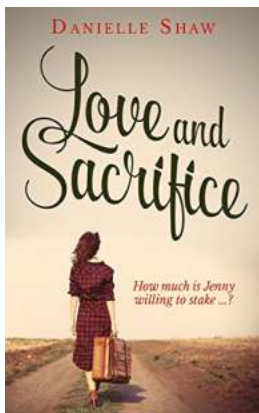
"Bellfy's deft rural sociological analysis cuts through centuries of whitewashing and exploitation with a single stroke" -- Victor R. Volkman, Marquette Monthly

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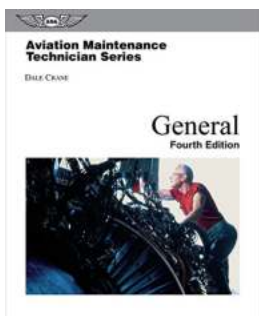
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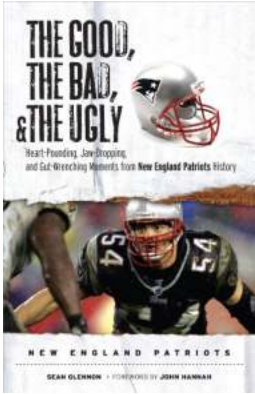
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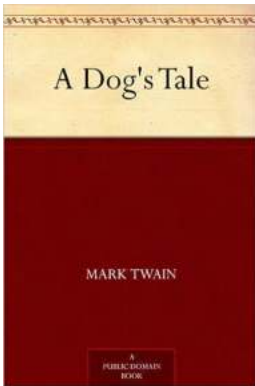
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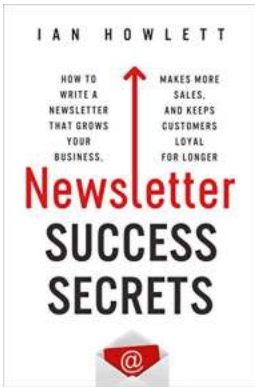
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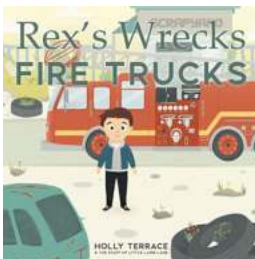
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THE NORTH CAROLINA RAILROAD, 1849-1871,
AND THE MODERNIZATION OF NORTH CAROLINA

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