

WOLF'S



EYE

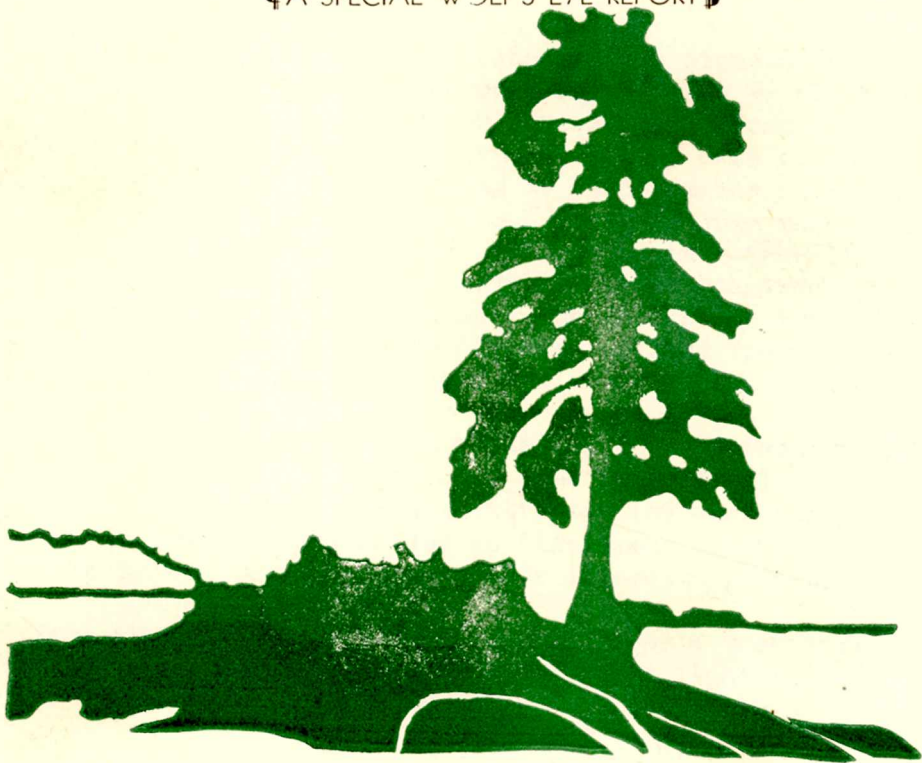
Vol. 1 No. 9

ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK, HOUGHTON, MICHIGAN

September 15, 1957

The Life of "LONE TREE"

¶ A SPECIAL WOLF'S EYE REPORT ¶



THE TREE ON LONE TREE ISLAND

Throughout the years in the memory of any of the living Isle Royalty, Lone Tree has stood watch over Rock Harbor. Because the island is so small and lonely looking, numerous jokes have placed dances, bars and taverns on Lone Tree. Any stranger who asks the whereabouts of the nearest bar is likely to receive the answer: "on Lone Tree Island; but it's only open on Saturday night". And for several years now Coach Orsborn, Postmaster at Rock Harbor, has been receiving advertisements for "The Lone Tree Beauty Salon".

In last month's issue of WOLF'S EYE was a statement by Mrs. Barber that "Lone Tree hasn't changed a needle since 1901." Since last month some research has been done on Lone Tree that will solve some of the questions concerning it.

First of all, a small core (about $\frac{1}{2}$ the diameter of a cigarette) was taken from the base of the tree -- which, incidentally is white spruce (*Picea glauca*). From this core, it was learned that the center of the base of the tree is hollow -- only about 2 inches of wood remains in tact. This is not a particularly serious thing as only the outer several inches of the wood is living wood in a tree of this size anyway; the inner wood (usually called heartwood) is dead wood and is normally filled with resins and impurities and turns a dark color. The diameter of Lone Tree at the base is approximately 15 inches.

The next step was to take a similar core $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet up from the base of the tree. Here, the tree is solid all the way through and the core that was extracted (by use of a special borer for this purpose called an "increment borer" -- usually made in Sweden) yielded some rather interesting facts.

Each year in the spring and early summer a tree grows rapidly, producing large cells that appear light in color

in the wood. During late summer and fall the tree produces very small cells in the wood that appear dark in color -- hence, the annual rings. By comparing the annual rings, it can be determined how well the tree grew last year by comparison to some other year -- 1920, for example. Better yet, a graph can be constructed to show the tree's growth for each year of its life.

The center annual growth ring in Lone Tree at the $4\frac{1}{2}$ foot level was produced in the year 1867....this we got by counting the rings from the outside in toward the center. Hence, we can assume that in 1867, Lone Tree was about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall (plus or minus an inch or two). From that year (1867) to the present time, the growth pattern of Lone Tree (see the accompanying graph) has had its ups and downs.

The years before 1901 were generally very good for Lone Tree. At its peak year (1880) Lone Tree grew $5/16$ of an inch in diameter and from 1867 to 1901 the tree grew $7-1/8$ inches in diameter (at the $4\frac{1}{2}$ foot level). After 1901, however, the tree grew slower and slower until in the years 1925, 1926, 1927, and 1928 it grew only about $1/5$ of one millimeter per year (it takes roughly 25 millimeters to make one inch). From 1901 to the present time, Lone Tree has grown only $2-3/8$ inches in diameter. Just what happened after 1901 to so radically decrease the growth of Lone Tree is a matter for some speculation. Most trees show considerable decline in growth after maturity is reached. However, the growth pattern of Lone Tree would indicate something more drastic has happened. Possibly the trees roots have found the going pretty tough -- there isn't much soil on that small island, and if the roots grow into the water they proceed to drown for lack of enough oxygen plus being frozen and mangled by ice during the winter.

Other things on Lone Tree Island are of interest too. Lone Tree is the only white spruce on the island -- no seedlings of the species were seen anywhere; nor were there any

balsam firs which are so numerous over most of Isle Royale. The major plants which were found on Lone Tree Island are: northern white cedar, mountain ash, balm-of-Gilead, high-bush cranberry, prickley rose, juneberry (sugarplum), red elder, goldenrod, cinquefoil, milfoil, and from the animal kingdom the only one which made itself visible on September 9th was the large black ant. Balm-of-Gilead, a type of poplar, is found almost only on present or ancient beach lines on Isle Royale and presumably it reproduces mainly by dropping small twigs from its branches which float away and root if by chance the twigs wash up on shore. Quite a few very small plants of highbush cranberry are on the island, but they've succeeded in growing only about 5-8 inches in height. The mountain ash on Lone Tree Island (three clumps of it) have grown only a foot or two high and show definite signs of browsing which indicates that moose do occasion the island -- probably in the winter months after Rock Harbor has frozen over.

In summary: Lone Tree is--

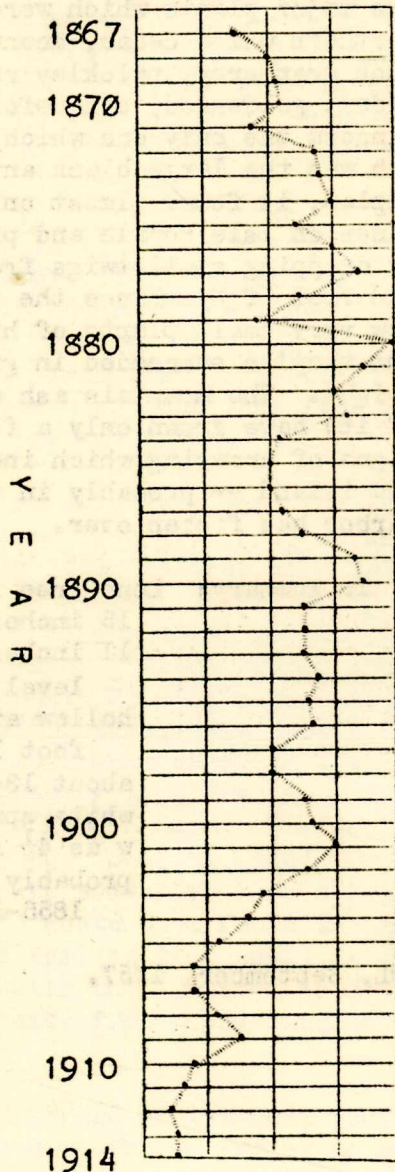
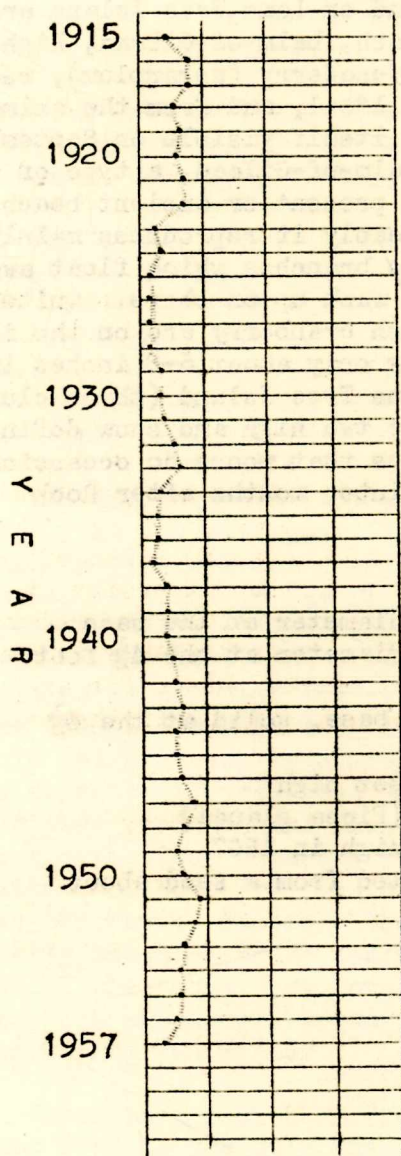
- 15 inches in diameter at the base
- 11 inches in diameter at the $4\frac{1}{2}$ foot level
- hollow at the base, solid at the $4\frac{1}{2}$ foot level
- about 18-20 feet high
- white spruce (*Picea glauca*)
- w as $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high in 1867
- probably started from a seed about 1855-1860

RML, September, 1957.

1 MILLIMETER EQUALS ABOUT 1/25TH INCH

MILLIMETERS 0 1 2 3 4

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THE YEAR-BY-YEAR GROWTH OF LONE TREE
FROM 1867 TO 1957

G U E S T S

Regional Director and Mrs. Tobin were guests of Superintendent and Mrs. Lewis from August 29 to September 4th. At the same time Regional Director and Mrs. Cox from Region One (southeastern United States) visited Isle Royale. The Tobin's, Cox's and Lewis' left on September 4th for Yellowstone and Grand Tetons National Parks where they will attend the Superintendent's Conference.

Superintendent and Mrs. Anderson from Independence Hall National Historical Park spent several days visiting Isle Royale on their way west to the Superintendent's Conference. With the Andersons were the Howard Stagner's. Mr. Stagner is the Assistant Chief of the MISSION 66 Staff in Washington. Both parties appeared to enjoy their stay on Lake Superior's finest island.

At the beginning of the month Dr. Durward Allen of Purdue University, Dr. Joe Hickie of the University of Wisconsin and Dr. Allen's son, Steve, visited the island on a preliminary wildlife survey. It is Dr. Allen's hope that a wildlife graduate student can be chosen for an intense wolf and moose survey on Isle Royale in the next several years.

NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION ELECTION RETURNS

September 1st was Election Day for the Isle Royale Natural History Association -- the first election held by the new association. Elected to the offices of the Board of Directors were:

Chairman -- Coach H. T. Orsborn
Treasurer -- Mrs. Robert M. (Ruby) Johnson
Member -- Peter O. Edison
Member -- Joseph E. Colombe

(cont. next page)

Article VI of the Association's Charter reads in part:

"The first Board shall be composed of the following: A Chairman, to serve in this position for a period of two (2) years or until the annual meeting of 1959; an Executive Secretary to serve as long as he shall occupy the position of Park Naturalist; a Treasurer, to serve for a period of two years or until the annual meeting of 1959; and two members to serve for a period of one (1) year each or until the annual meeting of 1958"

A date has not yet been determined for the first meeting of the Board, but because the board members are scattered all the way from Ft. Myers, Florida to Duluth during the winter months, the first actual meeting will probably be held after next June 15th. During the next several months, however, a list of By-Laws should be prepared by the board and the question of dues should be decided upon. These board actions will have to be handled by mail.

Membership cards are now completed and will be received by members at about the same time as this copy of WOLF'S EYE.

A GOOD PROJECT

One good project for ALL members of the Isle Royale Natural History Association to dive into right away would be a collection of Isle Royale Place name data. In the 1930's Mr. Fred Dustin published "Isle Royale Place Names" which has been a valuable publication over the years. Now, however, many names which do not appear in "Place Names" have come into being and a new edition ought to be started.

To get out a new edition of "Place Names" will require a lot of compiling from many sources. Now -- many members of the Association know the origin of many Isle Royale place names. It's a sure bet that Ed Holte and Sam Rude

for example, know the origin of "Castle Island" and "Stone House Island" in Siskiwiit Bay. And Frank Johnson probably knows the origin of the name "Ollies Dogs". And so it goes, many of us know the origins of some of Isle Royale's place names.

Now -- if YOU will take the time to jot these stories down (don't worry about proper English and spelling, etc.) and send them in to:

Isle Royale Natural History Association

Isle Royale National Park

Houghton, Michigan

we'll get started on this new edition of Place Names.

BUT, we'll have to have EVERYONE in on the act to successfully finish the project.

EUROPE BOUND

Tom Smith, Seasonal Ranger at Windigo for the past 2 years, and two friends of Toms are going to Europe this fall. They plan to leave the States on October 2nd aboard the Queen Mary and spend 6 months becyeling and youth hostiling their way -- first through northern Europe while the weather's warm and then to the sunny Mediterranean for the winter. Ah, yes!

NATIONAL PARK ENTHUSIASTS

The Zink family stopped at the Houghton Office on August 28 enroute home to Emerson, NJ following a western sojourn. For four seasons the three Zink's (father, mother, daughter) have trailered their little craft to Houghton, thence to Isle Royale aboard the Ranger II and spent their vacations cruising the harbors and bays of the park. The Zink's a re enthusiastic visitors to our National Parks and have just completed visits to Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, Mesa Verde, Arches, Grand Canyon of the Gunison, Rocky Mountain and Mt. Rushmore. From Yellowstone they brought greetings from former Chief Ranger Elt Davis. The Zink's thought that some areas were being a little overdeveloped and really appreciated the wilderness areas the most.

ALL BOARDED UP

The fifteen National Park Concessions employees, who stayed on after the visitor season to put the winter wraps on Rock Harbor Lodge, left on Friday, September 13th.

Those who departed from shrouded Rock Harbor Lodge aboard the Ranger II were: Ruth Sanders, Manager; Esther Berran, Head Cook; John Lingren, Guide; Edward Mezey, Clerk; Henry Moilanen, Maintenance helper; Tom Verran, Maintenance helper; Betty Pritchett, Hostess; Ellen Pietila, Housekeeper; Anna Ziegler, Laundress; Bill Hendrickson, Cook's Helper; John Paananen (Old John) Night Watchman; Paul Repath, General employee.

Karen Holte, Head Clerk-Curio Shop, left for Siskiwit Bay aboard the Voyageur, while John Huru, Guide and Hjalmer Moilanen, Head Maintenance man took the Concessions boat "Challenger" to Houghton where they will work on it during the winter.

Also from the Rock Harbor area, Coach and Mrs. Orsborn left the Rock Harbor Post office until next June.

SEASONAL EMPLOYEES LEAVE

Seasonal employees of the National Park Service at Isle Royale were among those aboard the September 13th trip of the Ranger II. Cliff Wetmore, Seasonal Ranger, Mott Island; Bob Johnsson, Fire Guard, Mott Island; Tom Keast, Radio Operator, Mott Island; Bob Janke, Seasonal Ranger, Amygdaloid Island; Tom Smith, Seasonal Ranger, Windigo; Ray Wiinimaki, Fire Guard, Malone Bay; Paul Richards, Clerk, Mott Island; Omar Larson, engineer, Mott Island; Paul Demagd, engineer, Mott Island. Electronics Engineer Oswald has returned to Houghton where he teaches at Michigan Tech. Seasonal Ranger Bob Dashk e left Windigo on the Voyageur for Grand Portage on his trek to East Lansing and another year at Michigan State.

WOLF'S EYE is published on the 15th of each
month by and for employees, residents and friends of
Isle Royale National Park

John G. Lewis, Superintendent

Robert M. Linn, Editor

Louise Fretter, Assistant Editor