

Wolf's Eye

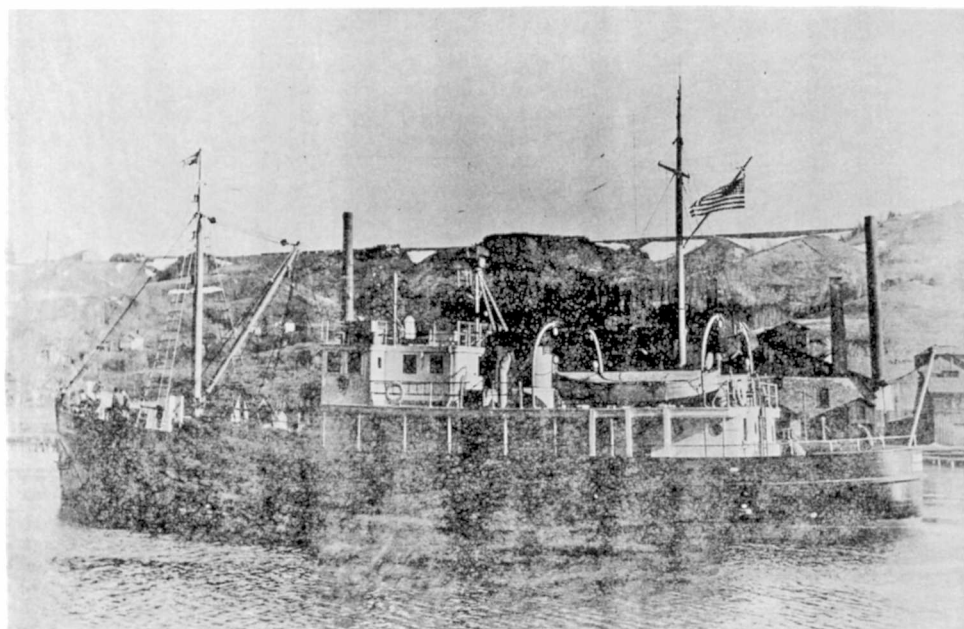
Isle Royale National Park





FIRST OVER! Here are the lucky ones just before the departure of Ranger II on April 10th -- the first trip to Isle Royale this year. Left to right: Jim Oswald, Supt. John Lewis, Roy Stamey, Bob Johnson, Susie Stamey (in doorway), and Frank Taddeucci. John Markham was also aboard, and of course, the gallant boat crew.

ON THE WAY. Ranger II as she steams past the Houghton dock on her way toward Lake Superior and Isle Royale.



VARIETIES OF THE LAKE TROUT

(Third in a series on Isle Royale Fishes by Stanley Sivertson)

As some people have expressed interest in the different varieties of Lake Trout in Lake Superior, I will attempt to describe some of the ones with which the commercial fishermen at Isle Royale are familiar.

The Redfin Trout spawns during the latter part of September and is a large fish, sometimes weighing as much as 40 to 50 pounds, and will go into waters as shallow as 4 to 6 feet to spawn. These trout have a darker skin than most, their fins are large, yellowish red, and were caught in greatest numbers in the Fisherman's Home areas, with the Cumberland Point and Rainbow Points areas the next best spots.

Another Lake Trout which is distinctly different from other trout is what Washington Harborites call the "Rock of Ages Trout". During June and July this trout is found on the very shallow reefs that are separated from the island by fairly deep water. Their meat is of such a deep red color that it is similar to that of a speckled trout or very red salmon. They have a short head and a deep set to their body, and are very rarely caught over six pounds in weight. Were it not for the shape of their tail, and the absence of bright speckled skin, they could pass for a large speckled trout. Curiously enough, the only place at Washington Harbor where they are caught, are the reefs surrounding Rock of Ages Lighthouse.



Around the Rock Harbor area is a trout that is known to the Johnsons, Bangsunds, Mattsons and Edisons as "Mooneyes". These trout are usually caught in from 30 to 60 fathoms of water, and their average size is from 2 to 6 pounds. They have large bulgy eyes, which account for their name, and their flesh is white in color. Their sides are very thin, although high in fat or oil content. It is not a very good frying fish, but is acceptable smoked.

The Salmon Trout, or Channel Trout is a fish that the fishermen used to catch when the season was open during all of October. This fish grew to a very large size, were silvery in color, and had very red meat. I thought that they were the most beautiful of all trout in appearance. These very large trout would seek out the narrow channels to spawn in October. They would swim up the Washington Harbor Channel toward Windigo as far as Beaver Island, also the Rock Harbor Channel and the Channels at Wright's and Malone Islands. The curious thing about these large salmon-like fish was their spawn. They were about the same size and color as those of a speckled trout, and much smaller than those of the regular Lake Trout.

These are the most distinct varieties of Lake Trout that I know of; however, in a catch of several hundred pounds of trout, there are usually several different kinds of trout not so distinct, but with different body shapes, coloring, size and marking patterns on the skin, etc.

Some varieties of trout became scarce even before the Lamprey invasion; other varieties increased in abundance. My father believed that when the fishermen first started gathering spawn for the fish hatcheries, some of the distinct varieties of trout became mixed. Because of this mixture, some coarser varieties lost their rough texture and vice versa. When the fish spawned naturally, they probably found mates of their own types, thus keeping the races from being intermingled to any great extent, perpetuating their own qualities, either good or bad.

THINGS HAVE BEGUN TO MOVE!

It all started about the time the WOODRUSH (USCG) came into the Keweenaw Waterway and cracked the ice. That was on the morning of April 4th -- one of the earliest openings of the waterway in history.

On April 10th, Ranger II backed away from the Houghton dock and made one of the best-easiest-smoothest trips to Isle Royale that Captain Greenleaf can remember -- he still shakes his head over it. Aboard on the first trip were Superintendent Lewis, Roy and Susie Stamey, John Markham, Frank Taddeucci, Bob Johnson, Salem Lahti, Jim Oswald, and the crew -- Captain Greenleaf, Johnny Williamson, Ralph Berg, Epi Jutila, and Francis Belleville.

The arrival at Rock Harbor was a wee bit icy, but the WOODRUSH had been there several days before and had broken a path as far as the Mott Island dock. John Markham, Frank Taddeucci, Salem Lahti and Bob Johnson began "opening up" Mott Island and are currently getting things going over there preparatory to the arrival of the rest of us. Roy and Susie Stamey jumped off the Ranger at Malone Bay where they'll stand vigil during the early spring fishing season.

All this means were getting a little earlier start this year. This is the result of a "mild" winter with very little snowfall and NO precipitation now for over a month. It's very dry in the Lake Superior area AND WE MUST BE VERY VERY VERY CAUTIOUS WITH ANYTHING THAT WOULD START A FIRE. This may well be another year like the mid-'30's. Everyone should be on his toes, not only being extra careful with fire, but always on the alert for smoke which he should report AT ONCE.

The next Ranger II sailing to Isle Royale is scheduled for April 24th or 25th, when a few more of us will begin operations at the island. And we can barely wait!!!

FROM AND ABOUT THE ISLE ROYALTY

From Tom Smith after a long, long journey: "Safe and sound and once again in wonderful America. Our Atlantic crossing took only thirty-two days. Sure is a long time to go without seeing a tree.....It has been a real pleasure to receive and read the WOLF'S EYE while traveling abroad. Many thanks to the international department for the mailing service." You're very welcome, Tom.....gave us "international prestige".

And what do you know?????Coach reports that CUSPIDORS are NO LONGER required for the Post Offices. We wonder how SOME of the Isle Royalty will ever get along without them at the Rock Harbor Post Office!?!?!?

Ruby Johnson reports that the north shore Isle Royalty are busier than beavers getting ready for the first trip over.... we suspect that the JEFFREY will be loaded down to the gills.

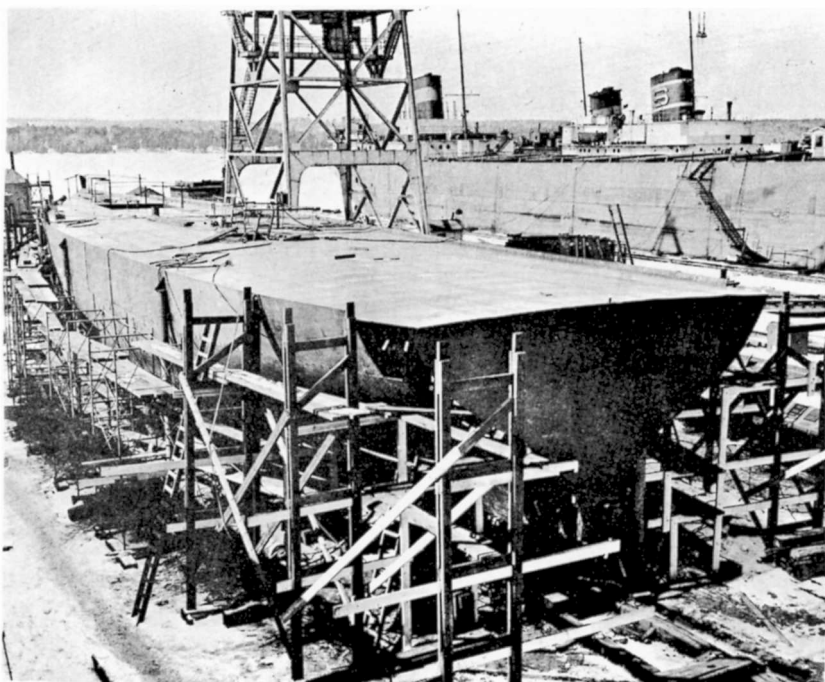
Dennis Glen Cooper writes: "....just recently I had Ruth Sanders Bards on my television program, with her very charming husband. We did an interview with her in regard to her present life, intentions, and that sort of thing, and talked a great deal about Isle Royale. Her appearance gave her many friends in the Detroit area a chance to see that she was married, and so on. She tell me that she is coming to Isle Royale this summer for a vacation, so we expect to see her up there..... On March 22 I will present the Isle Royale story for the American Museum of Natural History in New York...." Mr. Cooper also reports that he will be on Isle Royale again this summer sometime in August.



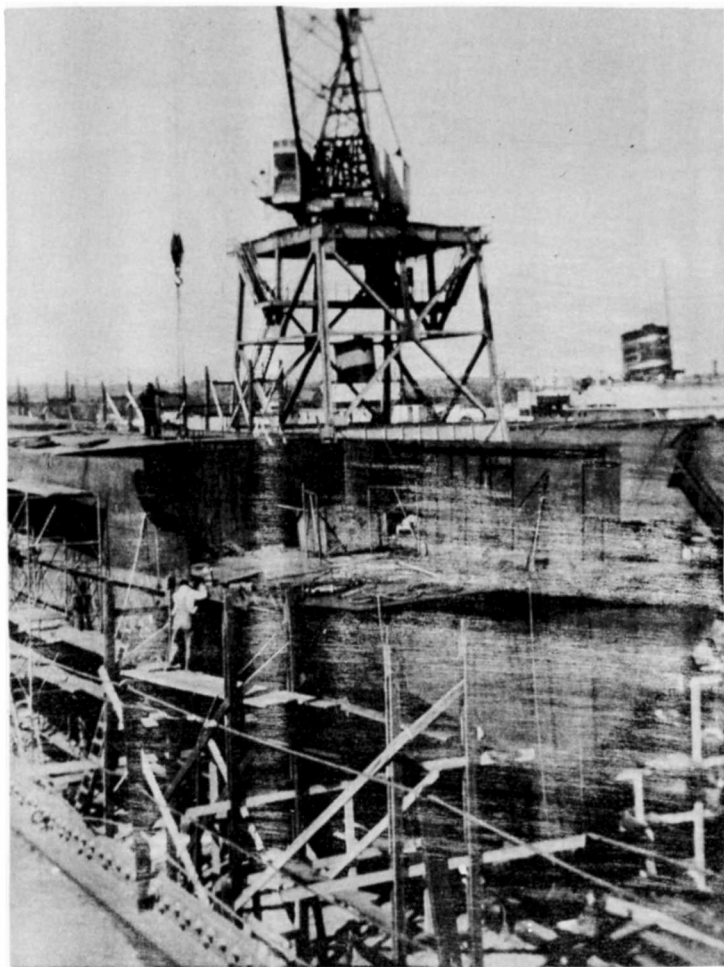
Ice at the Mott Island dock greeted the Ranger II on April 10th.



WOODRUSH, as she came into Portage Lake just a few days before Ranger II left for the island. Until the Woodrush showed-up, no boat had been able to break the ice through these parts.



This photo was taken some weeks ago showing the hull of Ranger III as far as the main deck (Warner Photo Green Bay)



The Ranger III at Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin
on April 8th. (Photo by Ralph Berg)

Isle Royale Natural History Association

The Wolf's Eye Press

Isle Royale National Park, Houghton, Michigan