

La Pointe: Village Outpost on Madeline Island

Hamilton Nelson Ross



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The Wisconsin Historical Society Press has republished a long-out-of-print classic of Wisconsin history, *La Pointe: Village Outpost*, by Hamilton Nelson Ross (1889-1957). The book, which first appeared in 1960, provides a 300-year history of La Pointe, a community on Madeline Island, one of Lake Superior's Apostle Islands.

With flair, humor, and solid scholarship, Ross tells the story of the region's evolution. Madeline Island served initially as a refuge for the local Ojibway from their enemy the Sioux before the arrival of French explorers in 1659, then an epicenter of the fur-trade era in the eighteenth century, and finally a summer vacation spot for businessmen and industrialists. Today the island attracts thousands of summer tourists who vastly outnumber the 200 or so year-round residents.

Ross first visited Madeline Island from his native Beloit as an eight-year-old, returning again and again over his lifetime to the Ross family cabin in La Pointe. His years of careful study and observation served him well. Ross told the region's story so eloquently that his book helped persuade Congress and the President in 1970 to preserve the islands in perpetuity as the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

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