

The Place of the Pike

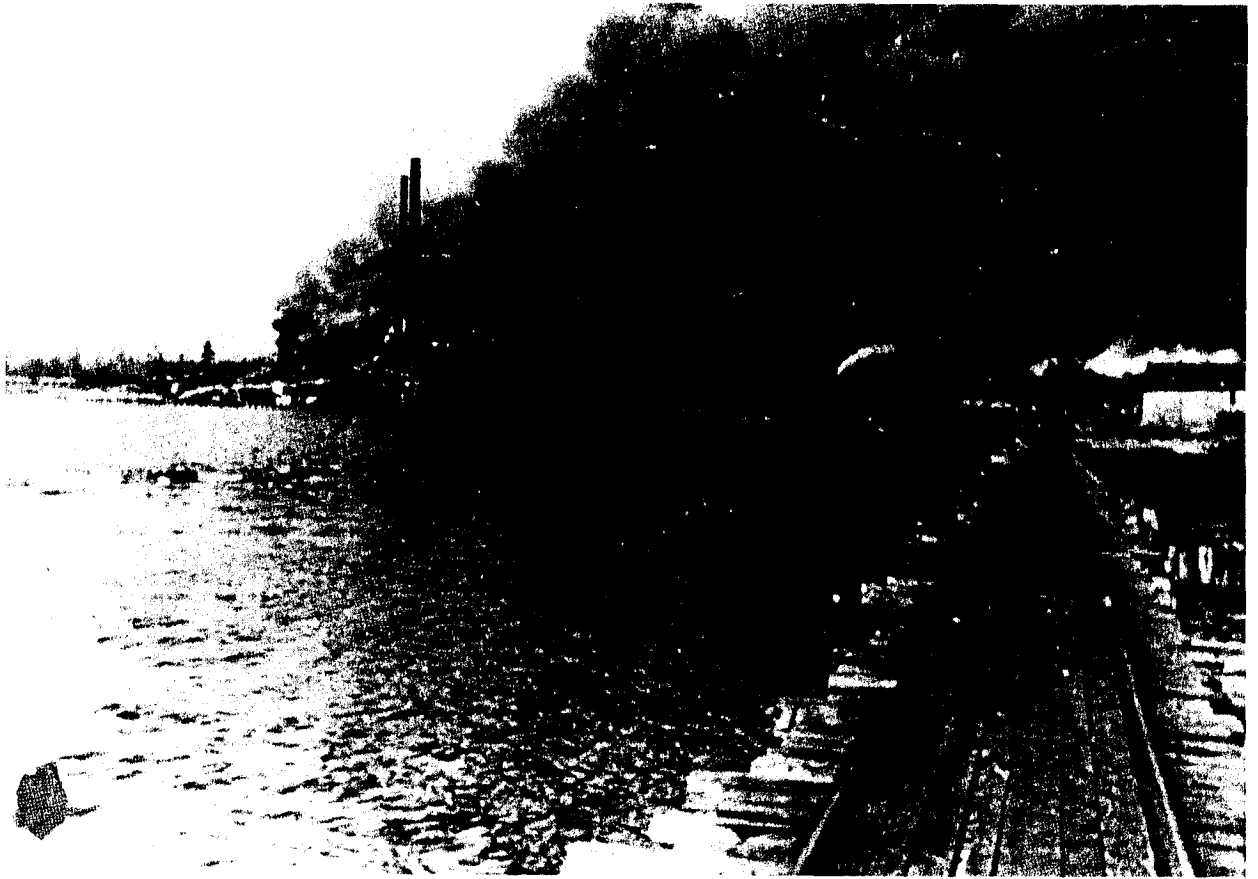
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A History of the Bay Mills Indian Community

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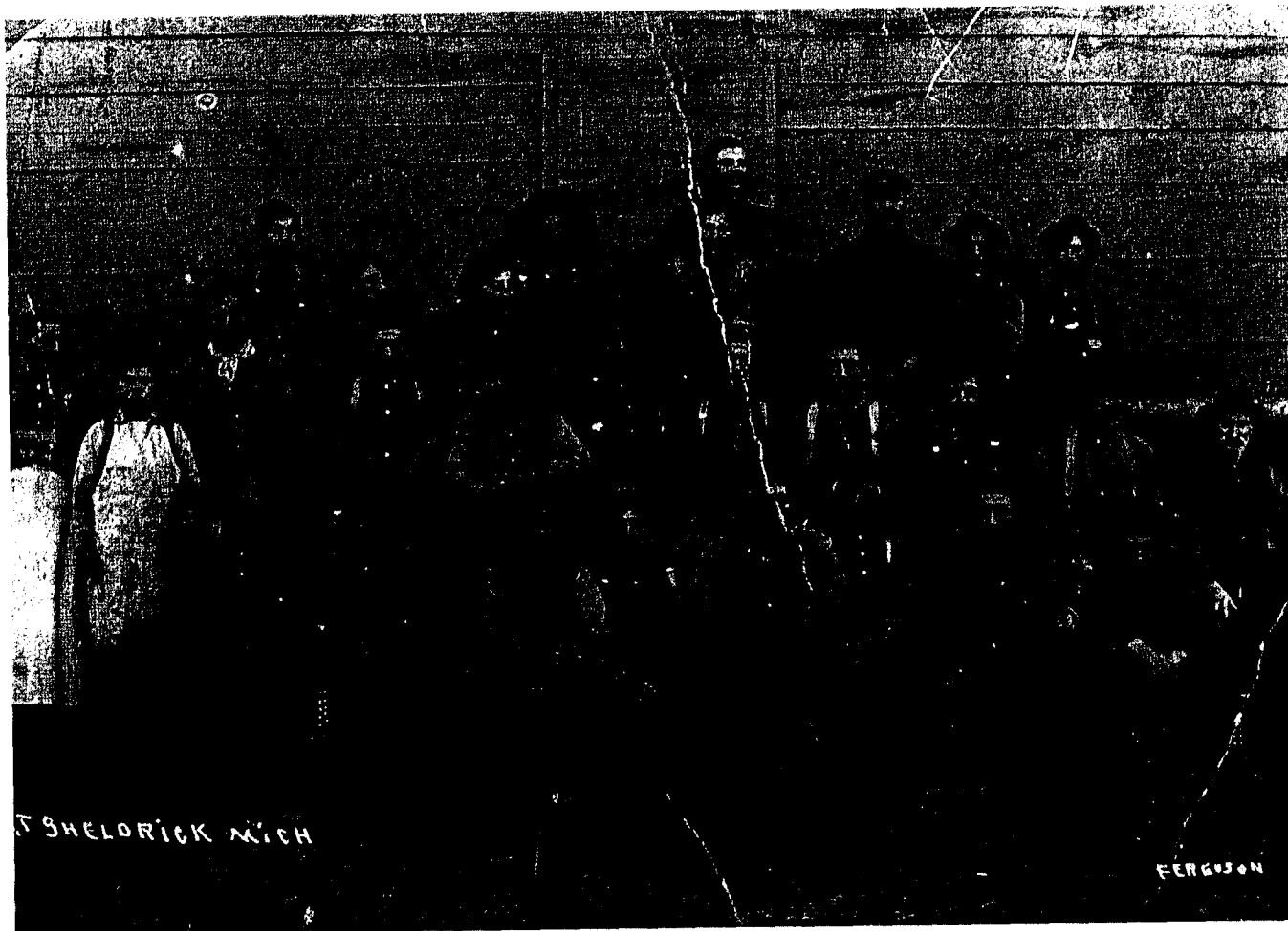


In 1904 the lumber mill complex and town burned to the ground. Bay Mills Point was soon after abandoned, which produced great economic hardship for the local Indian community. The railroad trestle that linked Bay Mills Point and Brimley is seen in the foreground. Pilings are still visible today. (Photograph courtesy of the Bay Mills-Brimley Historical Research Society.)

Unfortunately they had very few resources of any kind to provide for themselves or their families in the new twentieth century. With few exceptions, their allotments had been acquired by the Grimmer Land Company or the Cadillac Soo Lumber Company. The Bay Mills *Anishnabeg* continued to live in their village on the old Methodist mission and to make a living by fishing, picking blueberries, and working in the employ of the lumber companies as woodsmen.

The Bay Mills men often formed their own lumber crew and spent the winter at distant camps. For example, men from Bay Mills and Racoon made up the Shell-drake crew in the winter of 1902.

In the decades before and after the turn of the twentieth century, there were no formal roads to connect the new American towns springing up to exploit the natural resources of the Lake Superior coast. Most communication was by ship, which meant that communities were isolated each season after ice closed water navigation.



Sheldrake, once a bustling lumbering and sawmill community on the shore of Whitefish Bay midway between Paradise and Whitefish Point, was the source of employment for Bay Mills lumbermen. The Bay Mills crew of 1902 is shown in this photograph. *Top row (left to right):* Joe Wasquam, Hugh Lewis, John "Sonny" Cameron, Thomas Teeple, Perry Teeple (behind unknown person), Lawrence Miron, Charles Menominee, Albert Menominee. *Middle row:* Louis Waishkey, Joseph Cameron, Arthur LeBlanc Sr., Peter Waishkey, Henry Waishkey, Charles Waishkey, Duncan Cameron, Joseph Teeple, and Samuel Waishkey. *Bottom row:* William Menominee, Thomas "Teddy Bear" Marshall, Henry LaBranche, George Teeple Jr., (sitting behind) George Teeple Sr., George Martell, Charles Shawano, Elijah Tadgerson, Hugh Cameron, Andrew Waishkey, and an unknown individual. (Photograph courtesy of Linda Parish.)