

Whitefish Island National Historic Site

Over 2,000 Years of History



Sources: Tourism Sault Ste. Marie

The name for the area around the rapids reflects Ojibwe and French variations

Baawatigong (or Bawating) – Ojibwe word meaning place of the rapids

Sault – French word meaning “leap” or “fall” of water

Sault de Gaston – The French named it in honour of Gaston the brother of King Louis XIII of France in 1623

Sault Sainte Marie (or Sainte Marie du Sault) – named by Jesuit missionaries in 1668

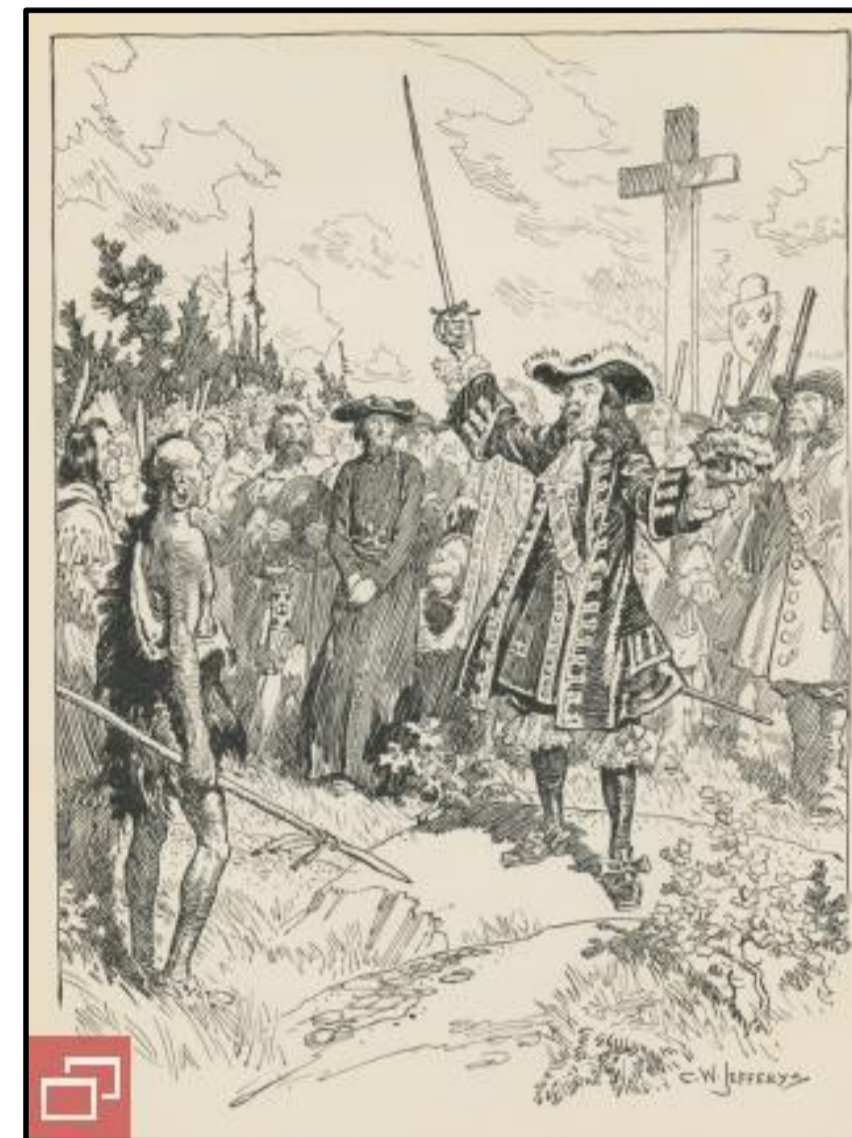
The Fishery



Source: <http://batchewana.ca/communities/whitefish-island/>

Jesuit missionaries first described the methods of fishing in the river rapids by Métis and Ojibwe fisherman using nets and spears. Barrels of fish were shipped east to Montreal. The fishery became a major source of profit for the fur trading companies.

Pageant of Sainte Lusson 1671



Source: Collection de manuels scolaires du CRCCF, Université d'Ottawa

First treaty with Anishinaabe nations of the Upper Great Lakes in which France claimed sovereignty over the area.



William Armstrong, Indian Encampment, Whitefish Island, Watercolour on Paper, Collection of the Art Gallery of Algoma from the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton Collection

The island was the centre of prehistoric trade and settlement from around 300 BC up until 1889.

Walking trails and boardwalks on the island are popular, and fishermen continue to fish in the rapids.



Source: Parks Canada

van Haaften, J. (2018, June). *Whitefish Island National Historic Site of Canada*. Sault Ste. Marie, ON.: City of Sault Ste. Marie Municipal Heritage Committee.

Étienne Brûlé – first European explorer

Area first appears on Samuel de Champlain's map

French fur traders and Jesuit missionaries arrive

Pageant of Saint-Lusson

North West Company's post

Island expropriated; Anishinaabe residents forced to relocate

Declared a National Historic Site

Land returned to Batchewana First Nation

1623

1632

1642

1671

1783

1895

1981

1998