

Hotel Williams,
Williams Log House
Murray Bay (west shore)
Grand Island
Alger County
Michigan

HABS No. MI-258 B

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PHOTOCOPIES

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HOTEL WILLIAMS,
WILLIAMS LOG HOUSE

HABS No. MI-258B

Location: Murray Bay (west shore), Grand Island, Alger County, Michigan.

Present Owner: Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company, Ishpeming, Michigan.

Present Use: Part-time residence.

Significance: This building is of historical interest as the one-time home of Abraham W. Williams (1792-1873), American Fur Company Trader, and as one of a group of buildings on Grand Island devoted to the fur trade.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Thought to have been constructed in 1837 or before 1840 for the American Fur Company. (William F. Lawler, in Michigan History, 22: 282-283 [Summer, 1938]; The Lure of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, 1955).
2. Original and subsequent owners: Purchased by the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company in 1901. (This information is incomplete).
3. Original plans and construction: This appears to have been a simple rectangular building originally. Physical evidence indicates that a porch was added on the east side and a lean-to added on the west side, at an undetermined date or dates. The roof and chimney, and probably a number of interior features, have also been altered.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A small old log building of historical interest, considerably altered.
2. Condition of fabric: Fairly good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Original portion 28' (three bays) wide and 24' (two bays) deep; one-and-a-half stories; faces east.
2. Walls: Walls of the original portion are of squared logs laid horizontally.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See HABS photocopy, HABS No. MI-258 B-2, for a view of first and second floor plans.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: This house occupies a small clearing in a wooded area on the western shore of Murray Bay near the southernmost point of Grand Island. It is thought that the earliest trading post of the American Fur Company on Grand Island was located near this southern point. The existing buildings, described elsewhere (see MI-258C, MI-258D, MI-258E and MI-258F, used by the American Fur Company, are a short distance north of this site.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Architect, Historic American Buildings Survey
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Edited by: Susan McCown
Historian, Historic American Buildings Survey
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