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Mission: Raven Hill provides a place that enhances hands-on and lifelong learning for all ages by connecting science, history & the arts.

History Journal: Wawatam stuck in the ice

June 22, 2020

In 1922, the Michigan Railroad Car Ferry Chief Wawatam was stuck in the ice in the Straits of Mackinaw between St Ignace and Cheboygan. Her sister ship Sainte Marie went to her aid and became lodged in the ice as well. The Sainte Marie later was able to return to harbor. The Wawatam remained encased in the ice for about a week and many of the passengers had to return to land by walking or horse drawn sleigh. Both vessels were owned by the Mackinaw Transportation Company. The Chief Wawatam was a coal-fired ferry and icebreaker that operated from 1911 to 1984. She shuttled train cars back and forth between St. Ignace and Mackinaw City for her entire working life.



Stuck in the ice