



The Future City on the Inland Sea: A History of Imaginative Geographies of Lake Superior

Eric D. Olmanson

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Throughout the nineteenth century, the southern shores of Lake Superior held great promise for developers imagining the next great metropolis. These new territories were seen as expanses to be filled, first with romantic visions, then with scientific images, and later with vistas designed to entice settlement and economic development. *The Future City on the Inland Sea* describes the attempts of explorers under government, commercial, or scientific sponsorship to project their imaginative visions on a region where the future did not happen as planned. Author Eric D. Olmanson takes a fresh look at the settlements in the vicinity of Chequamegon Bay and the Apostle Islands by analyzing the texts and images left by the missionaries, geologists, ordinance surveyors, newspaper editors, and boosters. *The Future City on the Inland Sea* shows how new visions of the place absorbed and replaced the old ones, eventually producing what might be called for the first time “a region.” More than a regional geography, *The Future City on the Inland Sea* is an appraisal of these early efforts to meld geographies of physical nature with those of human ideals, a demonstration of how thoroughly and paradoxically those two realms are entangled.

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