



United States Life-Saving Service in Michigan (MI) (Images of America)

William Peterson

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Michigan, the Great Lakes State, is full of rich maritime traditions and with these traditions comes the danger and risk of shipwreck. Author William D. Peterson has compiled in this new book a photographic history of the United States Life-Saving Service in the Great Lakes region, and immortalizes in it the men who paved the way for the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915. In 1854, the U.S. Government provided funds for lighthouses, boats, and life-saving equipment along the Atlantic seaboard to alleviate shipping disasters. These early efforts greatly reduced the number of lives and property lost to shipwrecks. In the heart of the Midwest, however, the Great Lakes alone claimed 4,500 vessels, 1,300 people, and more than 27 million dollars in monetary damages between 1855 and 1876. These staggering losses prompted Congress to pass legislation putting the United States Life-Saving Service (USLSS) into operation in Michigan and other Great Lakes States. Pictured here in almost 200 images and detailed captions are Michigan's 38 USLSS stations and their crews along the Great Lakes, including Ottawa Point, Grand Haven, Holland, and South Manitou Island.

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