

dred miles in circumference. The former has twenty-seven tributaries of various sizes. A solitary river issues from it, known by the name of Leech Lake River, forming an important outlet, from one hundred to one hundred and twenty feet wide, with a depth of from six to ten feet. It has a moderate current and flows into the Mississippi, after a course of from forty-five to fifty miles."

This quotation from a most reliable source, will give to the reader an idea of the size of Leech Lake, and its great importance to the Indian can be judged by its numerous natural resources. It abounds in wild rice in large quantities, of which the Indian women gather sufficient for the winter consumption of their families. The shores of the lake are covered with maple which yields to the industry of the hunter's women, each spring, quantities of sap which they manufacture into sugar. The waters of the lake abound in fish of the finest quality, its whitefish equalling in size and flavor those of Lake Superior, and are easily caught at all seasons of the year when the lake is free of ice, in gill-nets made and managed also by the women.

At the time when the Ojibways first took possession of Leech Lake and the surrounding country, which is covered with innumerable lakes and water courses, beaver, and the most valuable species of fur animals abounded in great plenty, which procured them the much coveted merchandise of the white traders. The lake itself is said in those early days to have been, at certain seasons of the year, literally covered with wild fowl and swan; pelican and geese raised yearly their brood of young on its numerous islands. From this circumstance Goose and Pelican Islands have derived their names. The incentives, therefore, which actuated the first Ojibway pioneers to fight so strenuously for its possession, were many and great, and soon caused the band who so fearlessly occupied it to be