

1855



2005

A day in Flint History



1825: Fur trader Jacob Smith founds Flint on former Chippewa land

Jacob Smith appears to have had his eye on the Grand Traverse of the Flint River for many years. As early as 1811, he had built a small cabin there to use in his fur trade. He was not the only man to have seen the possibilities, for one or more structures had existed there for well over 50 years, built by one or the other of the French traders. Geographically, the Grand Traverse was at the exact southernmost point of the Flint River, where its southwesterly course turned to the northwest. Indians traditionally travelled by

canoe and the Flint River as they journeyed to Detroit to collect government bounties as well as to trade. The Grand Traverse was, therefore, one of the best-known points in all of eastern Michigan. It was an ideal spot and it fitted Jacob Smith's needs perfectly. Almost as soon as he was given possession of the land there, he moved at once to build a cabin and take up residence.

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