

Arch Rock

Mackinac Island, Michigan

This natural limestone arch spans some 50 feet, creating a spectacular window through which to see Lake Huron more than 140 feet below. Formed during the Nipissing post-glacial period, a period of high Lake Huron levels following the end of the Wisconsin glaciation, Arch Rock is one of the top tourist destinations on Mackinac Island.

2024

- The Milliken Nature Center opens

1875

- Mackinac National Park was created in part to protect Arch Rock and other geological features that remain in what today is known as Mackinac Island State Park.

Late 1800s

- Victorian vacationers in the late 1800s would make the trek to Arch Rock after dark to watch the moon rise through the opening.

Early 1800s

- The earliest written accounts of Arch Rock come from the early 1800s, including one mention that labeled walking across the arch “a rash enterprise.” (*It is illegal to cross the arch these days.*)

Native American Legends

- Native American legends view Arch Rock as a bridge to the afterlife – or, as a bridge for the spirits to descend upon earth.

4,000 years ago

- Scientific evidence suggests that Arch Rock is about 4,000 years old, hollowed out by splashing waves when water levels were much higher. Back then, much of Mackinac Island was beneath the surface of what’s known as Lake Nipissing. Then, as the lake level dropped, the water eroded softer material and left the limestone breccia intact as an arch.

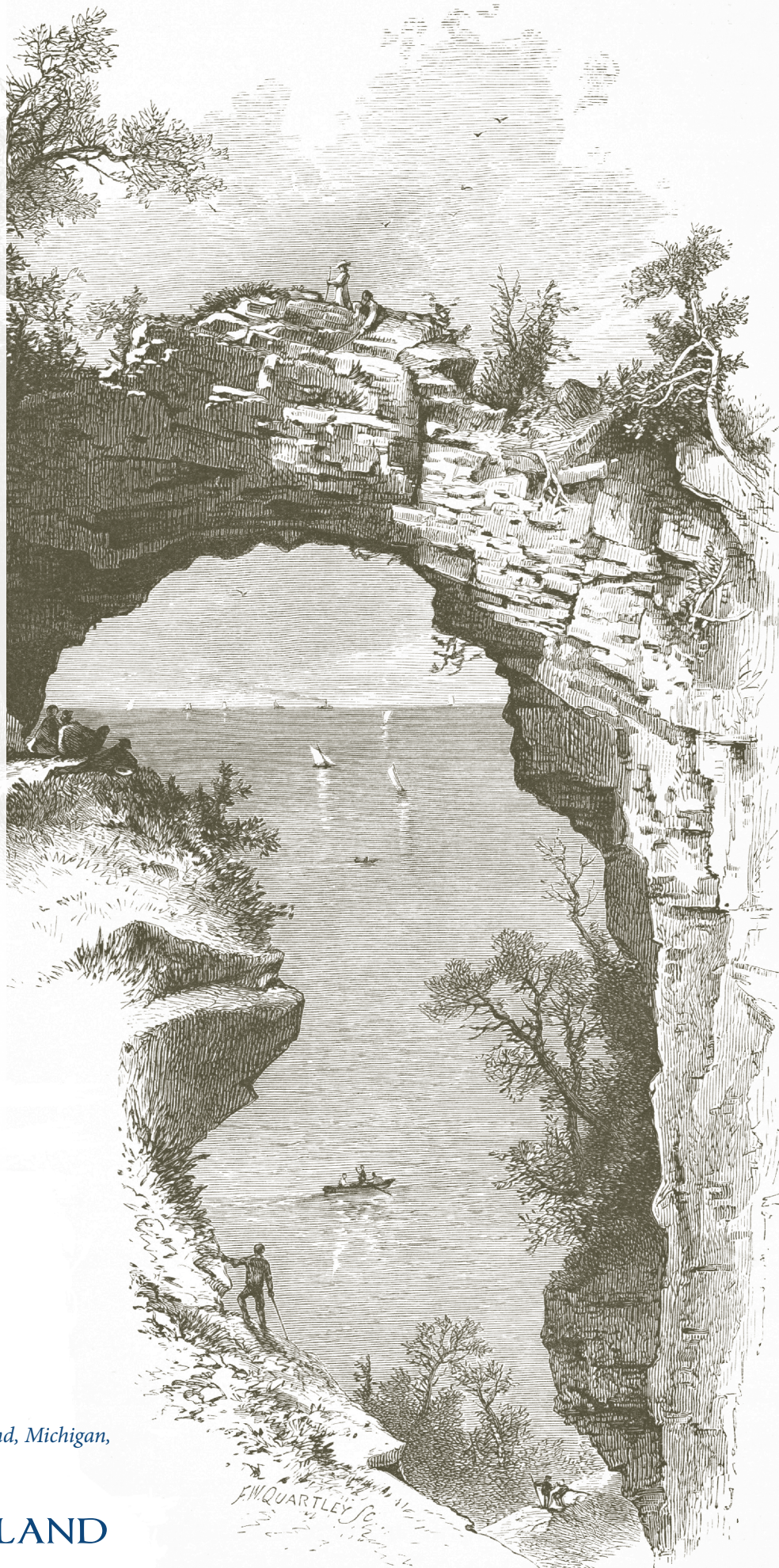


Illustration: Natural Arched Rock at Mackinac Island, Michigan, USA. Pen and pencil engravings published 1872.



MACKINAC ISLAND

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