

Historical Marker - S740C - Douglass Houghton / Douglass Houghton (Marker ID#:S740C)



Front - Title/Description

Douglass Houghton

Douglass Houghton, Michigan's first State Geologist, was born in Troy, New York, on September 21, 1809. He studied under Amos Eaton at the Van Rensselaer Polytechnic School in Troy. In 1828 he graduated and became a professor of chemistry and natural history. In 1830 Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass asked Eaton to recommend a public lecturer for chemistry and geology. Eaton chose Houghton, who moved to Detroit. In 1831 he became the surgeon and botanist for Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's expedition to discover the source of the Mississippi River. During the trip, Houghton studied smallpox among the Chippewa Indians, was a correspondent for the Detroit Journal, and recorded more than two hundred plants. From 1832 to 1836 he practiced medicine in Detroit. In 1838 he became a professor at the University of Michigan.

Significant Date:

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

Registry Year: 2016 **Erected Date:** 2016

Marker Location

Address: 5059 Fourth Street

City: Eagle River

State: MI **ZipCode:** 49950

County: Keweenaw

Township:

Lat: 47.41268300 / **Long:** -88.29652800

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Douglass Houghton

Douglass Houghton became the State Geologist of Michigan in 1837. His primary task was leading the Geological Survey of Michigan. During annual surveys, Houghton and his team explored rivers, salt springs, and mineral deposits. In 1841 Houghton reported to the state legislature that copper deposits on the Keweenaw Peninsula could be commercially mined. This led to a copper mining rush in 1843-44 and the development of the region into the center of the copper mining industry in the United States. Houghton became a founding member of the Association of American Geologists and Naturalists in 1843 and was mayor of Detroit from 1843 to 1844. On October 13, 1845, Houghton and two men drowned when their boat capsized near here during a storm on Lake