

Fifty Years of National Parks

YELLOWSTONE'S SEMI-CENTENNIAL MARKS IT AS THE FIRST OF NINETEEN GREAT SCENIC PLAYGROUNDS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



YELLOWSTONE, WYOMING



ROCKY MOUNTAIN, COLORADO

ZION, UTAH

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

FIFTY years of National Parks! Yellowstone has been celebrating its semi-centennial this summer. When it was established by act of congress in 1872 it was the first public playground of the people created in all history. Now the United States has nineteen and several other nations have followed our example.

Yellowstone is a land of wonders and its early history is in keeping. Our third president, Thomas Jefferson, bought the Louisiana Purchase—the unknown land between the Mississippi and the Rockies—from Napoleon Bonaparte in 1803. In the spring of 1804 Jefferson started Lewis and Clark westward from St. Louis to see what we had got for \$15,000,000. They went to the mouth of the Columbia and returned to St. Louis in 1806, after being given up for lost. Both going and returning they passed a little to the north of the Yellowstone, but heard nothing of it.

John Colter, one of their men, turned back before reaching St. Louis to trap beaver on the headwaters of the Missouri. He discovered the Yellowstone in 1807, returned to St. Louis in 1810 and told about the geysers and other marvels. St. Louis refused to believe and laughed at the Yellowstone as "Colter's Hell." Gen. William Clark, Colter's commander, was apparently the only man to believe; on Clark's official map of the Lewis and Clark expedition you will find traced "Colter's route in 1807."

Jim Bridger, one of Gen. William H. Ashley's lieutenants in the Rocky Mountain Fur company, rediscovered the Yellowstone in 1827. Bridger was as good a mountaineer, plainsman and guide as this country ever saw. But he was a practical joker along the line of monumental lies—he was the inventor of the obsidian cliff, boiling spring, alum creek and echo canyon stories which have been Western classics for nearly a century. So his report of the Yellowstone wonders was set down merely as "another of Jim Bridger's big yarns."

In 1842 and again in 1862 men reported the wonders of the Yellowstone. Nobody would believe them. In 1869 the semi-official Washburn-Langford expedition from Montana succeeded in getting a hearing. But it was not until 1870 that a special federal government expedition established the existence of the Yellowstone.

Thus it took sixty-three years and more than six "discoveries" to put the Yellowstone officially on the map. Cornelius Hedges—he has deserved well of his country—September 18, 1870, by a camp-fire in the Yellowstone, proposed that the wonderland be made a national park—a public playground set aside for the people's use forever. The idea took. Congress established the Yellowstone National park March 1, 1872.

The United States now has nineteen national parks containing 10,859 square miles or 6,949,700 acres. Chronologically in the order of formation they are as follows:

- 1832—Hot Springs, Arkansas, 911 acres, originally a reservation, made a national park this year; 46 curative hot springs.
- 1872—Yellowstone, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, 3,348 square miles; geysers and other volcanic exhibits, Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, large lake, great animal preserve.
- 1890—Sequoia, California, 252 square miles; 12,000 big trees over ten feet in diameter, and some over thirty-five feet and 5,000 years old.
- 1890—Yosemite, California, 1,125 square miles;



THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AT PLAY Photo by Courtesy U.S. Forest Service

Yosemite valley, high waterfalls, three groves of big trees.

1890—General Grant, California, four square miles; big trees.

1890—Mount Rainier, Washington, 324 square miles; Mount Rainier with forty-eight square miles of glaciers.

1902—Crater Lake, Oregon, 240 square miles; lake in crater of extinct volcano, with sides 1,000 feet high.

1903—Wind Cave, South Dakota, seventeen square miles; cavern with many miles of galleries and chambers.

1904—Platt, Oklahoma, 848 acres; medicinal springs.

1904—Sullys Hill, North Dakota, 780 acres; wild animal preserve.

1906—Mesa Verde, Colorado, 77 square miles, prehistoric cliff dwellings.

1910—Glacier, Montana, 1,534 square miles; mountains, lakes and glaciers.

1915—Rocky Mountain, Colorado, 397 square miles, heart of the Rockies, Continental Divide, peaks up to 14,255 feet.

1916—Hawaii, Hawaiian Islands, 118 square miles, three famous volcanoes on two islands, tropical scenery.

1916—Lassen Volcanic, California, 124 square miles; only active volcano in United States proper, other volcanic exhibits.

1917—Mount McKinley, Alaska, 2,200 square miles; highest mountain in North America (29,300 feet), great wild animal preserve; not yet accessible.

1919—Grand Canyon, Arizona, 958 square miles, gorge of the Colorado river.

1919—Lafayette, Maine, 5,000 acres; group of mountains on Isle of Mount Desert.

1919—Zion, Utah, 120 square miles; gorge of the Rio Virgin.

Many volumes could be filled with photographs of first-class scenery in these national parks. The photographs reproduced herewith were selected for these reasons: Yellowstone is the oldest, largest and best known of our national parks. Rocky Mountain is the most popular. Grand Canyon is the greatest natural wonder in the world. Lafayette is the only national park east of the Mississippi. Zion is the newest of our nineteen. The remaining picture, a scene on the way to Rocky Mountain, is typical of the American people at play in the national parks.

The visitors to the national parks in 1921 numbered 1,007,335; the private automobiles numbered 175,825. Rocky Mountain led with 273,737 visitors and 57,438 automobiles. Hot Springs was second with 130,968 visitors. Yosemite was third with 91,513 visitors and 18,947 cars. Yellowstone had 81,651 visitors and 15,736 cars.

Appropriations in 1921 were \$1,031,549 and revenues were \$396,928. Eventually the national parks will be practically self-supporting.

The act of 1916 creating the national park service, a bureau of the Interior department, sets forth that the fundamental purpose of the national parks is "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and

to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

There will be more national parks. The policy of the national park service, as set forth in 1916 by the late Franklin B. Lane, then secretary of the interior, is that the national parks of the future should be justified by "scenery of supreme and distinctive quality or some natural feature so extraordinary or unique as to be of national interest and importance. The national park system as now constituted, should not be lowered in standard, dignity and prestige by the inclusion of areas which express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit which they represent."

The national park movement is now nationwide. There is an army of enthusiasts. These enthusiasts are preaching that the mission of the national parks is manifold; that general use of them by the people will bring physical, mental, moral and financial benefits.

This national-park transcontinental tourist traffic by private car is getting to be a big thing, with tremendous possibilities in dollars. The scenic West was literally full of motorists this summer on vacation trips ranging from two weeks to the whole season. All sorts of estimates have been made of what this means financially to the country to have this money spent at home instead of in sightseeing abroad. It is purely guesswork to estimate what the million and more visitors to the national parks this summer paid out in money. An arbitrary minimum estimate of \$100 each gives a total of \$100,000,000.

The national park enthusiasts have formed an organization of their own—the National Parks association. It was formed by unofficial friends of the national parks to enter a field of the movement which the federal government apparently does not intend to occupy. The present policy of congress—if it has any national park policy—is merely to provide for the protection, maintenance and development of the parks, leaving it to the people to determine the use they shall make of them. The association is an organization of the people themselves to enable them to use effectively these public playgrounds. At present the enjoyment of the American people of its national parks is largely emotional. Among its many other activities the association purposes a campaign of education to double the enjoyment of the people by adding understanding. It says in effect to the American people:

"Our national parks are nature's great laboratories and museums. They are not merely wonders and scenery. They are exhibits on a mighty scale of the processes by which nature has been and is making America. You may double your pleasure in these exhibits by comprehending their meaning through intelligent study. Let us 'See America first!' But let us also know America! Let us know its natural history as well as its national history. Let us differentiate, distinguish and appreciate. Then we shall really know. Then we shall really enjoy."

BAD FOR BRUIN

Animal Evidently Didn't Know Mule's Capabilities.

Chances Are That Particular Bear Will Never Again Engage Pugilistically With Humble Worker.

Two amusing bear stories, both vouched for by reputable eye-witnesses, are going the rounds here, says a dispatch from Prince George, B. C.

Forest fires in northern British Columbia during the past month have had a peculiar effect upon some of the wild animals of the woods, judging from some of the stories brought to Prince George.

A fight between a fire-crazed bear and a mule, in which the bear was worsted, occurred at L. Mason's ranch at Bednesti, B. C. The forest fire routed the bear from his lair, and in its dash from the flames into the open country it collided violently with a mule. The bear was promptly stretched on the ground by a double tattoo from the capable hind hoofs, and the mule calmly resumed its interrupted grazing.

Thoroughly angered, the bear picked itself up and cautiously approached the mule from a different angle. The huge paw was brought down with a resounding thwack on the mule's ribs. This was unfortunate. The hoofs were again brought into play, after a quick, accurate maneuver for position, and the fight was called off, so far as the bear was concerned.

Mr. Mason, who had witnessed the unusual encounter, dashed to the house for a rifle to finish the bear, should any life be left. Before he could get back to the scene, however, bruin managed to get groggily to his feet and return to the less exciting environment of the forest fire.

A fire patrol ranger is sponsor for another bear story. While making a survey in the mountain district he came upon a young cub suffering from severe burns on feet and body. The youngster was whimpering from the pain and the forester took pity on it, lifted it into his car, and there made it fast with some rope.

The patrolman started on his journey only to discover that the mother bear had appeared and was in hot pursuit. As the track ran uphill at this point, the bear, making long strides, gained steadily, and the need for strategy was clearly indicated. The forestry book of instructions does not cover a situation such as this, but the ranger was resourceful and decided that the best plan would be to throw the cub overboard.

His attempts to untie the knots on the lashings which secured the youngster to the machine, however, proved futile. Pursuer and pursued came to a yet steeper grade, with the advantage all with the former. Finally, with one mighty effort, the old bear threw herself on the back of the car, holding on by her claws and paws.

This is where the forester decided to retire in favor of the enemy. He dived off the car, and regained his feet in time to see it continuing its journey eastward, with a mother and child happily reunited as its passengers. Later the car was found, run down and everywhere intact, except the side where the cub had been tied, the old bear having torn it out to release her offspring.

Can It Be True?

Thomas A. Edison, in a recent interview talked about the many advantages of being deaf.

"For instance," he said, "a motorist hurried into a country drug store the other day and asked if he was on the right road to Brandywine."

"Brandy, yes," said the druggist, who was very deaf. "No wine, but plenty of brandy. I can see you're all right by your looks, sir." And he poured the motorist a stiff drink out of a big blue china jar labeled "Ipecacuanha."

"I don't want that," the motorist protested. "I want to know if this is the best road to Brandy."

"The best brandy? You bet it's the best," interrupted the druggist.

"No, no! The Brandywine!" yelled the motorist. "I want to get to the Brandy."

"Thank you," said the druggist. "I don't care if I do."

"And with a gratified smile he poured a second stiff drink out of the blue china jar for himself."

Something to Fall Back On.

"Suppose you were not allowed to write wheezes on prohibition, women's clothes, flappers and the movies?"

"Well," mused the column conductor, "in my younger days I was handy with tools. Maybe I could get a job in a garage."

Overlooking Nothing.

His Friend—Great Scott! That's a fine pearl you just found. It's worth at least \$500.

Mr. Grubtail—Yes, and I broke a tooth on it. As soon as I sell the pearl I'm going to sue this restaurant keeper for damages.

Girls Will Be Boys.

"What did the young man say when you told him you would be a sister to him?"

"He declined with thanks. He said he already had two sisters who borrowed his golf clothes."

School for Recruits.

Sergeant—What is understood by a theoretical instruction?
Recruit—It's an instruction which is not practical.

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A new source of potash is expected to be found in China, where some deep salt wells have been discovered that contain potassium salts in large quantities.

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Unfair Advantage.

"You don't care to sleep in a handsome mausoleum?"

"Not if I have to pay for it myself," replied Senator Snorthworthy. "A simple tombstone, just to keep the record straight, will satisfy me. The man who builds his own monument often robs posterity of the privilege it would like to exercise of forgetting him."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

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