Location
Banff National Park lies along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta, with its eastern entrance 65 miles west of the City of Calgary. The continental Divide, the boundary of the Park for 150 miles, with Yoho and Kootenay National Parks in British Columbia sharing this natural boundary for some distance. Jasper National Park adjoins it on the north in the vicinity of the Columbia Icefield. The total area of the Park is 2,564 square miles.

The detailed map in this folder has been prepared especially to assist visitors to identify readily the various features of the Park.

Purpose
Banff National Park is one of Canada's National Parks which form a chain of nature sanctuaries extending from Mount Revelstoke in British Columbia to Terra Nova in Newfoundland. These selected areas in their natural state for the benefit, education, and enjoyment of present and future generations of Canadians.

This vast area of some 29,000 square miles is administered by the Natural and Historic Resources Branch, Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources.

NATURAL FEATURES

Geological
Among the unique geological features of the Park are the hot springs bubbling out from the slopes of Sulphur Mountain. It was the discovery of these springs in 1883 which caused the great migration of ten square miles to be protected by the Government of Canada. This action originated Canada's present system of National Parks.

These springs originate from surface water which percolates downwards through pores, fissures, and cracks to great depths, where the temperature of the hot rock masses is very high. The heated waters return to the surface along a zone of fractures related to the thrust of the mountain rocks. On its way the steam and superheated water dissolves some of the limestone rock which has a high sulphur content.

The mountains of the Park are part of that great belt of almost parallel mountain ranges that extend for nearly a thousand miles in a north-westerly direction from the State of Montana through Alberta and British Columbia into the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Some of the peaks rise more than 11,000 feet above sea-level; deep valleys expose rugged cliffs of sedimentary rock which reveal the story of the mountains for all to see. These rocks vary in age from pre-Cambrian, seen in ridges exposed along the Trans-Canada Highway near Lake Louise (over 550 million years old) to Lower Cretaceous rocks (about 100 million years old) which appear at the foot of Cascade and Rundle Mountains, and contain coal seams. Several coal mines once operated in the park but such exploitation is no longer permitted.

Great icefields still cover large areas in the high mountain country on the Continental Divide, where there is considerable precipitation, much of it in the form of snow. Glacier tongues of these icefields are visible from the Banff-Jasper Highway: the Crowfoot, Bow and Peyto Glaciers are examples. Meltwaters from the glaciers form many beautiful streams and waterfalls and are the chief source of water on the Continental Divide. Where the meltwater pours into a flat valley, lovely green lakes accumulate, many of them dammed by glacial moraines. Among these lakes are Lake Louise, Bow Lake, Hector Lake, and Peyto Lake, and there are many others not seen from the highway.

The heated waters return to the surface along a zone of fractures related to the thrust of the mountain rocks. On its way the steam and superheated water dissolves some of the limestone rock which has a high sulphur content.

One of the most fascinating aspects of mountain geology is the tremendous pattern of erosion to be seen everywhere. The rocks are still being sculptured by ice, wind, water, and frost. Massive boulders, rock slides, moraines, thundering waterfalls, and placid lakes bear evidence of these forces of erosion. The slight tinge of green to be seen on the high scree slopes marks where small plants are beginning to grow as erosion leaves small pockets of soil among the rocks.

Visitors interested in the geology of the mountains may purchase The Story of the Mountains in Banff National Park, (75c), and A Guide to Geology for Visitors in Canada's National Parks, (51.50), from Park Information Centres.

Plantlife
Below the mountain cliffs lie alpine meadows flowering with Alpine and Arctic species of great variety and beauty, bordered in many places by groves of Lyall's larch, a deciduous conifer which turns gold in autumn. In association with this larch other alpine species of coniferous trees are the alpine fir and Engelmann's spruce, and on some arid slopes, the whitebark pine. These species of trees are fairly restricted in altitude, and below 5,000 feet give way to white spruce and lodgepole pine, with blue Douglas fir and some limber pine on drier slopes. However there is no firm boundary between the species and many spruce are hybrids of the white and the Engelmann's. Aspen poplar is fairly general but groves of it occur only in the broader valleys, where open meadows have developed. Balsam poplar is found along the river banks.

In the lower valleys are found an interesting blend of mountain and prairie flowers, varying with environment. The Indian paint brush is one of the most interesting plants to see, varying in colour and size but found at all altitudes. Several small orchids occur in the coniferous forests of the main valleys. The yellow avalanche lily and the chalice-cup or western anemone poke their heads through the snow at timberline in late June. Some of the best meadows in which to see flowers are within walking distance of the Tunnel Mountain campground, and along Highway 1A west of Banff. The flowers of the forest and river bank may be seen along the Spray River and along the Bow River below the golf course; vetches, winter-greens and wild roses grow here, while the twin flower and heart-leaved arnica scent the air. The plants of the Park are protected, and so others may enjoy them, are not to be plucked.

Wildlife
Many animals may be seen from the highways —black bear, elk, deer, moose, Rocky Mountain Sheep, and coyote. The Rocky Mountain Goat is a cliff dweller and scrutiny of the rocks and the steep meadows below is sometimes rewarding.

Red squirrel, chipmunk, and porcupine are common throughout the Park as are the Columbian ground squirrel, which frequents open meadows at all altitudes and the golden-mantled ground squirrel, which lives among the rocks.
Life are on sale.

boundaries. Several publications concerning wild-

through it. Some 185 species have been reported

wolverine and badger, are present in the Park,

of grizzly bears which spend the summers in the

Marmot and the small pika, a relative of the hare,

from the top of the largest conifer in his territory.

ruby-crowned kinglet, seldom seen but often heard

to date. Mountain music is provided by the tiny

are a few beaver, and muskrat are fairly plentiful,

are for the perpetuation of native species within the park

Centuries of erosion are etched in these rocks.

Although the area is not on a major flyway,

of some trails.

An abundant variety of plantlife is seen in the

Preservation

National Parks are selected areas set apart as

nature sanctuaries and special care is taken to

maintain them in their natural state. For this reason, all

animals is not permitted. This is in the interests of the

animal as well as the human, who could receive

serious injury.

Waste help protect your own Park for future

enjoyment. It is part of your national inheritance.

Prevent Fire

Campfires near the highway may be kindled only

in fireplaces provided for this purpose, and must be

completely extinguished before campers leave the site. Fire permits must be obtained from the Wardens for their own area are shown on a separate map and there is a

special map for trails in the Lake Louise area, a valley of the Bow River.
Pets
Dogs and cats may accompany visitors into the Park. For protection of park animals however, dogs must be kept on leash.

Motor Licence
Motoring visitors are required to obtain a park motor vehicle licence at the entrance. This licence is good in all National Parks for the entire season.

Motor-Boats
Motor-boats may be used only on Lake Minnewanka and on the Bow River near Banff. A free permit is issued by the Warden Service for boats using these waters. All motor-boats must carry proper safety equipment and conform with Federal Navigation Regulations.

How to Reach the Park
The Park is served by all usual methods of transportation — rail, air, bus, and car. The nearest airport is at Calgary, and there is a landing field near Banff for daylight landings of light aircraft. The park is an active winter sports centre with developed skiing areas at Mount Norquay and Sulphur Mountain at Banff and at Mount Whitehorn at Lake Louise. The ski season is from mid-December to late April generally.

A Brief History of the Park
The early history of this area is found in diaries and reports of those who explored routes for the pioneer fur-traders of Western Canada. Between 1800 and 1811, the route discovered by David Thompson up the Saskatchewan and Housse Rivers into the Columbia Valley was used, until hostile Indians caused it to be abandoned in favour of Athabasca Pass farther north.

Sir George Simpson, on his journey around the world in 1841 followed the Bow Valley beyond Banff and crossed Simpson Pass to the Vermilion River. In the same year, James Sinclair led his band of settlers across the Park to reach the Kootenay River en route to Oregon. Dr. James Hector in 1858 ascended the Bow River, crossed Vermilion Pass to the Kootenay and returned by Kicking Horse Pass — now in Yoho National Park.

Traders and prospectors continued to penetrate the area and in 1883, surveyors for the Canadian Pacific Railway searched for a route through the Great Mountain Barrier to lay their bands of steel into the then isolated Colony of British Columbia. In that year, railway workers learned of the Cave which had been formed by hot springs bubbling from the slopes of Sulphur Mountain, and erected a rough log building which was the first "bathing establishment" in this area.

Learning of this unique phenomenon of nature, far-sighted legislators in 1885 reserved an area of ten square miles around these springs to preserve them for the people of Canada. In 1887, by the Rocky Mountains Park Act, 260 square miles of this area were established as Canada's first National Park.

Early activities in the Park centred around these mineral hot springs. Access to the Park was by train and all other travelling was either on foot, on horseback or upon "tally-ho", drawn by four-horse teams. Motor cars were prohibited for the protection of the wildlife, and to maintain the serenity of the park environment until 1916.

The Lake Louise district was added to the park in 1892 and, in 1921, connected to Banff by road. In 1926 the road was extended westward to Field in Yoho. The Banff Windermere Highway, opened in 1923, provided access to Kootenay National Park and southeastern British Columbia. In 1940, the long planned Highway from Lake Louise to Jasper National Park was completed, which provides access to the Great Columbia Leefield and magnificent mountain scenery just east of the main ridge of the Rocky Mountains. This forged the final link in a road system connecting Banff with Yoho, Kootenay, and Jasper National Parks which together cover a territory of 7,814 square miles.

Requests for single copies of this folder and inquiries about the park should be sent to the General Superintendent, Banff National Park, Banff, Alberta, or the Director, Natural and Historic Resources Branch, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa.

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